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Soldier wounded in suicide attack files suit against bomber's employer

By RUSS BYNUM
Associated Press

SAVANNAH, Ga. — A U.S. soldier grievously wounded in a suicide bombing two years ago in Afghanistan filed suit Wednesday against an American defense contractor, saying it failed to supervise the Afghan who built an explosive vest on the job using the company's tools and parts.

The federal lawsuit by Spc. Winston Hencely, 22, accuses Fluor Corp. of allowing the Afghan national responsible for the bombing to work alone and to skip an escort off Bagram Air Base on the morning of Nov. 12, 2016.

The lawsuit claims that Fluor employed the man, but an Army investigation after the attack said that while his work was supposed to be supervised by Fluor, he was actually employed by subcontractor Alliance Project Services Inc., a veteran-owned business in Alexandria, Va. Fluor supervisors were confused about their roles, the investigation found.

SEE BOMBER ON PAGE 7



VIKI HENCELY/AP

Army Spc. Winston Hencely poses for a photo at Arlington National Cemetery in 2018.



U.S. DISTRICT COURT/AP

Police seized a cache of firearms and ammunition from the Maryland home of Christopher Paul Hasson, a Coast Guard lieutenant who prosecutors say is a "domestic terrorist" who had a hit list that included prominent Democrats and media figures.

Prosecutors: Coast Guard lieutenant planned widespread terrorist attack

By LYNH BUI
The Washington Post

A U.S. Coast Guard lieutenant and self-identified white nationalist has been arrested after federal investigators uncovered a cache of weapons and ammunition in his Maryland home that authorities say he stockpiled to launch a widespread domestic terrorist attack targeting politicians and journalists.

Christopher Paul Hasson called for "focused violence" to "establish a white homeland" and dreamed of ways to "kill almost every last person on earth," according to court records filed in U.S. District Court in Maryland. Although court documents do not detail a specific planned date for an attack, the government said he had been amassing

supplies and weapons since 2017 at the latest, developed a spreadsheet of targets that included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and searched the internet using phrases such as "best place in dc to see congress people" and "are supreme court justices protected."

"The defendant intends to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country," the government said in court documents filed this week, arguing that Hasson should stay in jail awaiting trial.

Hasson, of Silver Spring, Md., was ordered held for 14 days while the government weighs additional charges in his case when he appeared at a detention hearing in federal court in Greenbelt, Md., on Thursday.

SEE TERRORIST ON PAGE 10



Christopher Paul Hasson also served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1988 to 1993 and in the Army National Guard for about two years in the mid-1990s.

Facebook

MILITARY

Housing horrors prompt military quarters survey

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
AND JENNIFER SVAN
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — Clipboard-wielding military officers will be sweeping through family housing complexes throughout Europe in the next month asking residents about mold, rats, repairs and any other possible problems.

The effort to canvass residents about conditions at military-owned and military-leased housing comes after a recent investigative series by Reuters found housing provided to military families at many U.S. bases was dilapidated and dangerous, poisoning young children with lead and mold. The series showed that repeated complaints had gone largely unheeded.

On Feb. 15, top military officials ordered commanders to inspect all housing for which they were responsible within 30 days and to hold town hall meetings.

"We will hold our chain of command and private contractors accountable to ensure they are meeting their obligations to provide safe, high quality family housing," Army Secretary Mark T. Esper and Gen. Mark A. Milley, Army chief of staff, said in a joint statement last week.

In the Kaiserslautern area, home to the largest U.S. military com-

munity overseas, Air Force teams planned to start going door-to-door Thursday, said Col. Kevin Parker, 86th Civil Engineer Group commander. The Air Force oversees housing for all services in the Kaiserslautern Military Community.

Twenty two-person teams would canvass base housing areas on Landstuhl, Vogelweh and Ramsstein to reach everyone, including Army families, Parker said. Army officials were responsible for checking barracks' condition, he said.

Three questions would be asked, Parker said: Are you satisfied with the health and safety of your home? Do you have any work requests regarding health and safety of your home that a maintenance team has not addressed to your satisfaction? Do you have any other health or safety concerns with your home? Families may also request an in-person walk-through of their home, Parker said. Families also can answer those same questions on a survey that was emailed out, voiding the need for a site visit if there are no issues, he said.

Commanders have been told to document any health or safety risks in each unit using a standard checklist and to "take any needed immediate action ... to ensure the health and safety" of families, according to guidance from top Air



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Apartments in stairwell housing on Vogelweh in Kaiserslautern, Germany, are among 1,600 units that will be checked in the Kaiserslautern area as part of a servicewide review of Air Force family housing.

Force leaders.

Army officials at U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz have been told to conduct visits to all housing and barracks, but were still awaiting a detailed operational order from the commanding general, said Stefan Alford, a spokesman.

In Vicenza, U.S. Army Garrison Italy was still working out how and when the officers' visits of some 800 housing units on and off base would be done, said spokesman Jim Brooks.

He said the top officers in Vicenza, including commanders of U.S. Army Africa and the 173rd Airborne Brigade, could be ringing doorbells as part of the effort. Army captains would be checking on conditions at some 2,350 rooms in the barracks.

But the majority of housing overseas — private rentals — will not be checked, officials said.

There are about 1,600 military family housing units in Kaiserslautern but 85 percent of servicemembers with dependents live off base, Parker said.

More than 2,450 servicemem-

bers assigned to Vicenza live in privately-leased houses and apartments, Brooks said. But the military is not responsible for those; local landlords are, he said.

The substandard conditions detailed in the Reuters stories were in privatized military housing — on-base living quarters owned and managed by private companies with 50-year contracts. Privatization on U.S. bases began in 1996 aimed at improving housing quality while reducing costs to the services.

In Europe, however, the services own their on-base housing. The chain of command is also responsible for its leased housing.

It's not clear what the canvassing in the overseas housing will turn up, although officials said that they expected to find no significant health or safety issues.

After Reuters' first story documenting that old lead-based paint in housing on U.S. Army bases had poisoned young children, Vicenza officials tested a number of units last autumn and found no problem. That was as expected because most

Army-leased housing was new and Italy had banned lead-based paint, which causes cognitive deficits in young children, in 1961. On-base housing built before 1961 had been checked in 1997, according to officials, and 38 "findings" of lead paint had been fixed.

The Defense Department Inspector General's office had told the Pentagon three years ago that it had an unsafe housing problem with "pervasive" health and safety deficiencies including electrical and fire hazards, lead-based paint and mold.

The IG recommended stepped-up inspections and increased oversight of privatized housing. The Defense Department declined to do so, citing "unnecessarily increase costs" and "more government intrusion into a private business enterprise."

Stars and Stripes reporter William Morris contributed to this report. Morris and Jennifer Svan reported from Kaiserslautern, Germany.

montgomery.nancy@stripes.com
svan.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter:@montgomerynancy

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MILITARY

More troops arriving at the border this week

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Active-duty servicemembers are deploying to the U.S. southern border this week to begin laying more wire barriers, officials with U.S. Army North said. They will join about 2,300 personnel deployed in Texas, Arizona and California.

This wave of deployments includes military police, engineers, command and control elements, logisticians and general-purpose forces, which could be comprised of multiple units brought together specifically for this mission, said Col. Cathy Wilkinson, Army North spokeswoman. They will place about 140 miles of wire barriers with an estimated completion date of April 30.

Once finished, these units may

be required to assist in other duties as Customs and Border Protection continues to evaluate its support requests or be sent back to their home stations to await further assignment, she said.

This mission is part of an ongoing agreement between the Defense and Homeland Security departments to use military members to assist Border Patrol.

The first agreement between these agencies sent active-duty troops to the border in late October with an expectation they would return to their home bases by mid-December.

During that time, military engineers placed about 70 miles of barriers along ports of entry.

The most recent agreement, signed Jan. 11, will keep servicemembers working with Border Patrol through Sept. 30, with en-

gineers focusing on building barriers between ports of entry.

New barriers will be concentrated primarily in California and Arizona, but also in New Mexico and Texas, Wilkinson said.

Troops will begin deploying in March for a new surveillance mission requested by Border Patrol in the new January agreement.

"DOD forces will support (Border Patrol) agents by monitoring remote video surveillance system cameras in specially equipped (Border Patrol) vehicles in order to provide real-time situational awareness," Wilkinson said.

During a House Armed Services Committee hearing Jan. 29, Vice Adm. Michael Gilday, director of operations for the Pentagon's Joint Staff, said Marines out of Camp Pendleton, Calif., conducted a pilot program to de-

termine the training required for troops to operate this mobile surveillance equipment.

The January agreement called for about 3,750 troops to deploy to end with a total of about 4,350 serving at the border. At its highest level of operation in November, about 5,900 servicemembers were deployed.

The National Guard also is deployed along the southern border but in a mission designed to get more Border Patrol agents to the border. About 2,000 National Guard soldiers are deployed in Texas and Arizona. Guard members were also stationed in California and New Mexico, but those states' governors removed the troops, calling the deployment politically motivated.

Wilkinson said this change to

the National Guard mission has not impacted the plans of the active-duty troops.

On Capitol Hill last month, Gilday said the two deployments will cost more than \$680 million. The cost of active-duty troops from their initial deployment in late October through the end of January was about \$132 million.

The National Guard first arrived at the border in April and that deployment cost about \$103 million through the end of fiscal year 2018. The cost of their mission through fiscal year 2019 is estimated to reach \$448 million.

Gilday could not provide an estimate for the ongoing active-duty mission, as it is more malleable to the needs of Border Patrol.

thayer.rose@stripes.com
Twitter: @Rose_Lori

US soldier injured in car crash near garrison in Grafenwoehr

By MARCUS KLOECKNER
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY — A 48-year-old U.S. soldier was seriously injured in a car crash near the Army's garrison in Grafenwoehr, police said.

The accident happened Thursday on the B470 when the soldier's Toyota RAV 4 crashed into the rear of a long truck, police at Neustadt an der Waldnaab said.

The soldier had to be cut from the wreckage by firefighters, who were on the scene for about an hour trying to free the driver.

The driver of the long truck was driving from Eschenbach toward Weiden when he stopped at a

parking lot on the B470, police spokesman Markus Achatz said.

"After a short break, the truck driver pulled back on the B470," he said. "While accessing the road, the American crashed into the back of the truck." Police, who continue to investigate, said it was not immediately clear who was at fault.

The B470 had to be shut down for more than two hours. More than 40 firefighters and rescue workers responded to the scene.

Investigators said any witnesses to the accident should call Neustadt an der Waldnaab police at 09645-92040.

kloekner.marcus@stripes.com



Courtesy of Juergen Masching

A 48 year old U.S. soldier received serious injuries Thursday morning on B470 near Grafenwoehr, Germany, when he crashed into the rear end of a long truck.

Air Force Academy installs thousands of cameras for cadet safety

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Air Force Academy has installed several thousand closed-circuit TV cameras on campus over the past year to create a safer environment for cadets and to deter criminal behavior.

The cameras were mentioned by Lt. Gen. Jay Silveria, the academy's superintendent, during testimony Feb. 13 before a subcommittee hearing of the House Appropriations Committee about the military service academies. The superintendents of each military service academy testified nearly two weeks after the Pentagon released its annual report on sexual assault and harassment at the academies.

The report's anonymous scientific survey found that 747 students said they experienced unwanted sexual contact within the last year, a nearly 50 percent increase from 507 students in 2016.

During the hearing, Rep. John Carter, R-Texas, discussed how male and female cadets live in the

"This effort is ongoing and is intended to enhance the safety and security of our cadets."

Lt. Gen. Jay Silveria
U.S. Air Force Academy superintendent

dorms of the academies within their cadet companies and what can be done about their behavior when leaders are not there.

"How do we fix that in the military ... so, you can't lay the blame on the officer, he won't see these things happening while he's there; they will happen while he's not there ... There's so much (that) goes on (at) college campuses right now it's unbelievable. But yet we're holding you to a standard of honor," he said. "And how do we reach that? I don't know the answer."

Silveria said that the academy in Colorado is responsible for working harder to build a "culture of accountability," and that their leadership education has senior cadets who are about to

become Air Force officers take responsibility for what happens in their company.

He said that the safety and security of cadets were his responsibility.

"So we've installed thousands of closed-circuit TV cameras throughout our dorms for safety and security," he said.

The cameras were added to the existing camera system, said Meade Warthen, a spokesman for the U.S. Air Force Academy in an emailed response. They were approved in 2017 and their installation began in May 2018. They should all be installed this year.

In Silveria's submitted remarks to a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, which he spoke to after

the appropriations committee, he said "several thousand" additional cameras had been installed across campus. Warthen declined to give specific numbers.

The cameras have been installed in common areas at cadet dorms, including hallways, entrances and exits, study and TV rooms, stairwells and rooftops. They are not being placed in private areas such as cadet rooms, locker rooms, offices or restrooms, the spokesman said.

"This effort is ongoing and is intended to enhance the safety and security of our cadets," Silveria said in his HASC testimony. "Additionally, the units serve as a deterrent against criminal conduct, and provide footage for investigations in the event that an incident occurs."

The cost for the new cameras was \$5 million, Warthen said. They are planning to install more cameras, but he said those costs aren't available yet.

Asked if more people have been hired to monitor the camera feeds, he said for now "no additional manpower is needed to run

this system."

Citing security concerns, Warthen would not say whether cameras are monitored "in real time or viewed on recordings."

In his HASC testimony, Silveria said that the cameras were part of "policy improvements and campus changes" meant to "address issues in the overall culture and climate at our Academy, as well as promoting good order and discipline."

When asked what if any results have been gained from the cameras such as reduction in crime or criminal charges brought because of footage, the academy spokesman said they have "enhanced our ability to provide a safe and secure environment at the Air Force Academy."

"We are not measuring specific results of any one law enforcement tool in combating crime or ensuring protection of our people and property," said Warthen. "Taken together, these tools, including (closed-circuit TV), have aided in achieving this mission."

kenney.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlmmkenney

MILITARY

USAF chaplain preaches hope to Yokota airmen

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Even a two-star general has “moments of darkness,” the Air Force chief of chaplains told service-members Thursday at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo.

Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Steven Schack told several airmen gathered for a National Prayer Breakfast event at the Yokota Enlisted Club that, like everyone, he experiences disorientation, for example, on days when there are complaints at work, his kids don’t answer the phone or he has issues with his wife.

“There is a spirit in this world who wants us to believe that is where it ends,” he said. “There are airmen all over Yokota who believe this even now ... We had 100 airmen last year who decided that death by suicide was their only way out.”

Yokota’s 374th Maintenance Group had a string of airmen suicides in 2016 and Pacific Air Forces dispatched a “suicide prevention support team” to investigate there and at Misawa and Kadena air bases.

Overwork, especially in the maintenance group, was cited by some at Yokota as a cause of stress. Following the team’s visit, officials adjusted hours at recreation facilities and an on-base restaurant to cater to them on swing shifts.

Schack, 60, who commands 2,000 chaplains and religious affairs airmen, told the Yokota personnel that life can go to a dark place, but it always gets better.

“It takes us to a higher place than we have ever been before,” he said, recalling how good he felt holding his baby grandson on a recent visit to see his son, an Air



SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Air Force chief of chaplains Maj. Gen. Steven Schack told airmen gathered for a prayer breakfast on Thursday at the Enlisted Club at Yokota Air Base, Japan, that everyone experiences “moments of darkness” but that things get better in the end.

Force maintenance officer.

Schack told the airmen about visiting Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida following Hurricane Michael in October and seeing a damaged chapel and homes filled with seawater.

The airmen there had a right to be upset but they were thankful that nobody had been killed and that the Air Force was helping them to rebuild and resettle, he said.

Some of those at the readiness-themed Yokota breakfast wore body armor and helmets. An armored truck was parked in front of the building where it was held and tables laden with bacon and eggs were decorated with flower-filled ammunition canisters.

One of those wearing combat gear, Senior Airman Jaycee Hanes, 23, of Afton, Okla., said she went through her own rough patch three years ago. She was at her first duty station in Virginia when she got news that her grandmother had died, she said.

“I had a really good supervisor at the time who helped me get everything done so that I could go back to see my family,” she said.

Hanes said she got the message from Schack that there’s a light at the end of the tunnel.

“People go through a lot of rough times but if they just keep looking forward it’s going to get better,” she said.

robson.seth@stripes.com
Twitter: @SethRobson1

US, British ships train together in the Pacific

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

U.S. and British ships drilled this week in the South China Sea, the third joint training since Christmas by the two naval fleets in the Western Pacific, the Navy said.

The replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe and Royal Navy frigate HMS Montrose conducted maritime security and logistics training on Monday, the Navy said in a statement. Royal Marine commandos, Royal Navy sailors and Guadalupe crew members were involved in the exercise.

During a search-and-seizure drill, a boarding team from the Montrose embarked and secured Guadalupe, which posed in the scenario as engaged in illegal trafficking.

The ships also practiced using NATO procedures for replenishment at sea. That protocol ensures that the two vessels could safely and efficiently transfer fuel while underway, the Navy said.

“This was a valuable exercise for us, keeping our integrated Royal Navy and Royal Marines boarding team sharp and ready to deliver any mission assigned to them,” Cmdr. Conor O’Neill of the HMS Montrose said in the statement.

This week’s training comes only weeks after guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell and Royal Navy frigate HMS Argyll sailed together Jan. 11-16 in the South China Sea. The ships conducted communication and maneuvering drills and exchanged personnel.

For several days just before Christmas, British and U.S. ships were joined by vessels from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force for submarine-hunting drills in the Philippine Sea.

It was the first trilateral exercise of its kind in the 7th Fleet area of operations for the three navies, the Navy said.

Great Britain has stepped up its naval involvement in the South China Sea in the past year, a shift due in part to China’s disputed claims of sovereignty over much



TRISTIN BARTH/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Royal Marine commandos and Royal Navy sailors from the frigate HMS Montrose conduct a search-and-seizure drill aboard the USNS Guadalupe in the South China Sea on Monday.

of those waters and militarization of islands and coral reefs.

During a security conference in Singapore in June, British Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson told the audience that the nation would begin sending warships through Pacific waters to demonstrate its commitment to internationally recognized maritime rules in the region.

In October, Royal Navy commander Adm. Philip Jones told the Financial Times newspaper that Britain — despite protests by China — would continue to assert its right to freedom of navigation near disputed islands claimed by China. He described the patrols as a means of demonstrating tangible support for allies in the region.

In December, Williamson said Great Britain intended to establish a military base in Southeast Asia.

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: @WyattOlson



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Troops arrive in Europe in time for anniversary of D-Day

By MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

The 1st Infantry Division’s 1st Combat Aviation Brigade took the stick for the aviation element of Operation Atlantic Resolve during a transfer of authority ceremony Thursday in Illesheim, Germany.

The Fort Riley, Kan.-based brigade took over the mission from the 4th CAB, part of the 4th Infantry Division, which will be returning back to Fort Carson, Colo., after a nine-month rotation to Europe.

This is the second transfer of authority to 1st Infantry Division units in Europe in nine days. The division’s 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team took over the con-

tinuing nine-month tank duty in Eastern Europe from the Fort Hood, Texas-based 1st Cavalry Division’s 1st ABCT on Feb. 12.

Atlantic Resolve is the United States ongoing mission to provide security to Eastern Europe in response to Russia’s 2014 annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula.

The division has had a long presence in Europe, including World War I, WWII and the occupation of Germany. After participating in the Vietnam War during the 1960s, elements of the division returned to Europe and served in the Balkans in the 1990s. Until 2006, the division was based in Wuerzburg, Germany.

The current mission involves a continuous presence of armored

and aviation elements rotating “heel-to-toe” in Central and Eastern Europe as a contingency force, instead of permanently stationing the troops there.

The Polish Defense Ministry has sought to have the Americans permanently based there, with officials offering to pitch in funding for the facility, which Polish President Andrzej Duda has proposed naming “Fort Trump.” But other NATO allies like Germany favor the rotational units, so as not to provoke unwanted aggression from Russia by placing a U.S. base right on its border with Poland.

During their deployment, the division’s soldiers are expected to conduct exercises with NATO allies and partner nations through-

out the region.

This deployment comes at a special time for the storied 1st ID, known as “The Big Red One,” as they will be in Europe on the 75th anniversary of D-Day, when the division played a decisive role in the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

“It is of historic importance that we are here in Europe, today, following in the footsteps of our ‘Big Red One’ forefathers who landed at Normandy 75 years ago this June,” said Col. Chris Black, the incoming 1st CAB commander. “We are excited to work alongside and learn from our allies and partners for the foreseeable future.”

egnash.martin@stripes.com
Twitter: @Marty_Stripes

WAR ON TERRORISM

Navy linguist killed in Syria to be added to NSA memorial

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A black granite wall inside the National Security Agency lists 176 military and civilian cryptologists — the code-makers and code-breakers that protect U.S. communications and crack adversaries' systems — who have been killed in the line of duty since World War II.

Of those, 174 have been publicly named. Only two of them are women.

Next week, Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon Kent will become the third when her name is unveiled as the 177th entry on the National Cryptologic Memorial.

A ceremony honoring her at the spy agency's headquarters complex at Fort Meade, Md., is slated for Feb. 28 and is expected to include family members, an NSA spokesman said this week. She will be the sixth sailor and the first Navy linguist named on the wall since the Cold War.

An Arabic linguist with Fort Meade's Cryptologic Warfare Activity 66, Kent was among the four Americans and more than

a dozen others killed in a suicide bombing in the Syrian town of Manbij on Jan. 16. Her death has brought attention to the work female servicemembers have been doing alongside elite front line units and has prompted changes to a flawed Navy commissioning and waiver process that led to her deployment in lieu of attending a doctoral program.

Typically, NSA unveils newly added names in a wreath-laying ceremony at the 8-foot-tall by 12-foot-wide monument around Memorial Day weekend each year. The names of 23 servicemembers have been added to the wall since the 2001 ceremony, when NSA began a tradition of declassifying and sharing their stories. Kent's name will be the first etched into the polished stone wall since May 2015.

The wall is housed inside a secure area not generally open to the media or the public, but a replica is displayed at the National Cryptologic Museum, located near the NSA headquarters complex at the Maryland base.

Along with the names and the NSA seal, engraved into polished

stone are the words, "They served in silence," reflecting their secretive duties.

Kent's death, less than two months into her fifth combat deployment, has highlighted the role of women like her supporting elite outfits on hushed front line missions against insurgents and terrorists.

Kent was killed while doing intelligence legwork to aid larger efforts to track remnants of Islamic State, her husband, a retired Green Beret warrant officer, told Stars and Stripes. The 35-year-old mother of two and cancer survivor, who spoke seven languages and was considered a "badass" by many of her peers, spent much of her career working alongside special operations troops, family and friends have said.

Like Kent, at least four of the five Navy cryptologic technicians named on the NSA's memorial wall since 2001 — all men — were killed while supporting Navy SEALs and other elite units.

In May 2006, the spy agency added the first female servicemember's name, Sgt. Amanda N. Pinson, 21, of Lemay, Mo., who



Courtesy of the National Security Agency

Navy linguist Shannon Kent's name will be added to the National Security Agency's Central Security Service Cryptologic Memorial Wall.

was one of two soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) killed in Tikrit, Iraq, when a mortar round exploded near the division's headquarters in March of that year. She was the first female signals intelligence analyst killed in combat, according to the Army.

In May 2008, South Plainfield, N.J., native Sgt. Trista L. Moretti, 27, an Army signals intelligence analyst with the 25th Infantry Division who was killed in a June 2007 mortar attack in Nasir Lafi-tah, Iraq, became the second woman named on the wall.

Prior to Kent, the last Navy linguist to have their names inscribed on the wall were third class petty officers Patrick R.

Price and Craig R. Rudolf, who died in the Mediterranean Sea when the EA-3B Skywarrior they were aboard crashed while trying make a night landing on the USS Nimitz on Jan. 25, 1987, killing all seven crew members aboard. They were the last Cold War fatalities in the Navy's aerial reconnaissance program, according to the National Cryptologic Museum Foundation.

Kent became the first female U.S. servicemember killed in Syria since U.S. forces began fighting there as part of the U.S.-led campaign against ISIS that began in late 2014. She is slated to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery next week.

garland.chad@stripes.com

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Alies won't stay in Syria after US withdrawal

By KAREN DEYOUNG
AND MISSY RYAN
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON As the deadline approaches for the withdrawal of U.S. forces fighting Islamic State in Syria, America's closest European allies have turned down a Trump administration request to fill the gap with their own troops, according to U.S. and foreign officials.

Allies have "unanimously" told the United States that they "won't stay if you pull out," a senior administration official said. France and Britain are the only other countries with troops on the ground in the U.S.-led coalition battling ISIS.

Along with the United States, they have provided training, supplies, logistics and intelligence for the Syrian Democratic Forces, the Kurdish-dominated group that has done most of the fighting. U.S., French and British forces also man heavy artillery and conduct the airstrikes that have been decisive against the militants.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said last week that he was mystified by President Donald Trump's policy. On Tuesday, British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said "there is no prospect of British forces replacing the Americans" in Syria.

European refusal to stay unless Trump reverses at least part of his troop withdrawal order is one of several factors that U.S. military officials, lawmakers and senior administration officials have said should make Trump think again.

The concerns come as the administration has yet to reach an agreement with Turkey not to attack the SDF, which Turkey says is a terrorist group. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said the Turkish military, massed at the border, is preparing to move into northeastern Syria once the Americans leave.

One of the principal requests the administration has made of the allies, including Germany, which has no forces in Syria, is to form an "observer" force to patrol a 20-mile-wide "safe zone" on the Syrian side of the border, separating Turkey from the Syrian Kurds.

Officials in Ankara said Turkey's defense minister, Hulusi Akar, and his military chief of staff were traveling to Washington on Thursday to discuss Syria and other regional matters with acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan.

The SDF has appealed for Western nations to keep a cluster of up to 1,500 in northeast Syria to coordinate air support and back its efforts to hold militants and other adversaries at bay. In anticipation of the departure of about 2,000 U.S. troops, the Kurds are meeting with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Russia, his primary foreign backer along with Iran.

Russia, meanwhile, has proposed that Assad's forces simply be allowed to take over the entire area now controlled by the United States and its allies. "No one, in-



Children ride in the back of a truck that is part of a convoy evacuating hundreds of people out of the last territory held by Islamic State militants in Baghouz, eastern Syria, on Wednesday.

FELEPE DANA/AP

More than 150 ISIS militants handed over to Iraq from Syria

Associated Press

OUTSIDE BAGHOUZ, Syria — U.S.-backed Syrian forces fighting Islamic State in Syria handed over more than 150 Iraqi members of the group to Iraq, the first batch of several to come, an Iraqi security official said Thursday.

The official said the ISIS militants were handed over to the Iraqi side late Wednesday, and that they were now in a "safe place" and being investigated.

The transfer marks the biggest repatriation from Syria of captured militants so far — an issue that poses a major conundrum for Europeans and other countries whose nationals have been imprisoned as foreign fighters in Syria. The SDF is holding more than 1,000 foreign fighters in prisons it runs in the country's north, many of them Iraqis and Europeans.

The Kurdish-led Syrian force — and more recently President Donald Trump — have called on those countries to take back their nationals. SDF says it cannot afford to keep the captured foreigners in Syria, but few of their countries want them back.

Earlier this month, Iraqi Prime Minister Abdul-Mahdi said Iraq will take back all Iraqi ISIS militants in Syria, as well as thousands of their family members.

cluding the Kurds and the Turks, thinks the regime coming into the northeast is a good idea," the senior administration official said.

Trump has long complained that his own top aides and the military were blocking his determination to exit Syria since ISIS was defeated. In December, he said that the goal had been achieved and that U.S. troops were leaving "now," after which Defense Secretary Jim Mattis resigned. Trump subsequently agreed that the departure would be "deliberate and orderly."

The military is planning a full

The Iraqi security official, who spoke Thursday on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said the SDF are holding more than 20,000 Iraqis suspected of ISIS membership in prisons in northern Syria, adding that they will be transferred home in batches.

The handover came as the U.S.-backed Syrian force is involved in a standoff over the final sliver of land held by ISIS in southeastern Syria, close to the Iraqi border.

A few hundred people — many of them women and terrified-looking children — were evacuated Wednesday from the group's tiny tent camp on the banks of the Euphrates River, signaling an imminent end to the territorial rule of the militants self-declared "caliphate" that once stretched across a third of both Syria and Iraq.

Some 300 ISIS militants, along with hundreds of civilians believed to be mostly their families, have been under siege for more than a week in the tent camp in the village of Baghouz in eastern Syria. It is not clear how many civilians remain holed up inside, along with the militants.

More trucks were sent in Thursday to the tip of a corridor leading to the camp to evacuate more people, but Associated Press journalists on the ground outside Baghouz said no civilians emerged.

Central Command in charge of U.S. forces in the Middle East.

U.S. and foreign officials spoke on the condition of anonymity about the sensitive and ongoing diplomatic discussions and military operations.

In recent weeks, Trump has said that nearly 100 percent of the wide swath of Iraq and Syria that once formed the ISIS caliphate has been liberated, although a small patch of militants has stubbornly hung on in the southeast. Trump said last Friday that he expected the complete "eradication of the caliphate" to be an-

nounced "over the next 24 hours," but no such announcement has been made.

Military officials have repeatedly flagged what they see as the hazards of a hasty pullout, even after ISIS' territorial presence has been eliminated. Officials expect that the group will retain an insurgent capability and the potential to stage a comeback, like it did after the American departure from Iraq in 2011, and they estimate that between 20,000 and 30,000 militants remain in the two countries.

Senior officials, including Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have cautioned that the SDF requires ongoing assistance to stabilize cleared areas.

Last week, Votel said publicly that he did not support Trump's withdrawal decision.

Graham, who leads a group of lawmakers opposed to the pullout plan, has proposed leaving 200 U.S. troops in northeastern Syria as a way to incentivize European allies.

In a closed-door meeting at last week's Munich Security Conference, Shanahan faced tough questions from congressional delegates who said he hadn't articulated a substantive justification for Trump's exit plans.

"Are you telling our allies that we are going to go to zero by April 30?" Graham asked Shanahan, according to an account Graham gave to Washington Post columnist Josh Rogin. When Shanahan replied that those were the president's order, Graham said he replied, "That's the dumbest f---ing idea I've ever heard."

Shanahan, he said, agreed that likely consequences included a return of ISIS, a Turkish attack on Kurdish forces and an advantage for Iran.

Lt. Col. Joseph Buccino, a Pentagon spokesman, said the meeting was productive and "ended on a positive note for all parties."

An official familiar with the Pentagon's view of the meeting said Shanahan was prepared for tough questions from lawmakers but did not want to appear to be questioning the White House plan. Pentagon officials anticipated that portions of the meeting could be made public.

Bolton has told allies that even if they withdraw from northern and eastern Syria, U.S. troops would remain at the American garrison at Tanf, on Syria's southern border with Jordan. Bolton is the administration's leading hardliner on Iran and believes, as he recently told reporters, that Tanf "is still very strategically important in connection with our determination that Iran not achieve this arc of control stretching" from Tehran through Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

But military officials said they had received no such instructions from Trump. The National Security Council declined to comment on the Tanf situation beyond referring reporters to Bolton's previous remarks on the subject.

WAR ON TERRORISM

US: ISIS refugee is not a citizen

By MATTHEW LEE
AND JAY REEVES
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An Alabama woman who joined Islamic State in Syria won't be allowed to return to the United States with her toddler son because she is not an American citizen, the U.S. said Wednesday. Her lawyer is challenging that claim.

In a brief statement, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave no details as to how the administration made its determination.

"Ms. Hoda Muthana is not a U.S. citizen and will not be admitted into the United States," he said. "She does not have any legal basis, no valid U.S. passport, no right to a passport nor any visa to travel to the United States."

Hassan Shibly, a lawyer for the woman, insisted Muthana, 24, was born in the United States and had a valid passport before she joined ISIS in 2014. He says she has renounced the terrorist group and wants to come home to protect her 18-month-old son regardless of the legal consequences.

"She's an American. Americans break the law," said Shibly, a lawyer with the Florida chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "When people break the law, we have a legal system to handle those kinds of situations to hold people accountable, and that's

all she's asking for."

Muthana and her son are now in a refugee camp in Syria, along with others who fled the remnants of ISIS.

Shibly said the administration argues that she didn't qualify for citizenship because her father was a Yemeni diplomat. But the lawyer said her father had not had diplomatic status "for months" before her birth in Hackensack, N.J.

He released a copy of a woman's birth certificate, issued two months after her birth in October 1994, to support his claim.

President Donald Trump said Wednesday on Twitter that he was behind the decision to deny her entry, tweeting that "I have instructed Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and he fully agrees, not to allow Hoda Muthana back into the Country!"

The announcement comes as the U.S. has urged allies to take back citizens who joined ISIS but are now in the custody of the American-backed forces fighting the remnants of the brutally extremist group that once controlled a vast area spanning parts of Syria and Iraq.

Muthana's lawyer said she was "just a stupid, naive, young dumb woman," when she became enamored of ISIS, believing it was an organization that protected Muslims.

Shibly said she fled her family in Alabama and made her way



HODA MUTHANA,
ATTORNEY HASSAN SHIBLY/AP

Hoda Muthana left Alabama to join Islamic State after becoming radicalized online and now wants to return to the United States.

to Syria, where she was "brainwashed" by ISIS and compelled to marry one of the group's soldiers. After he was killed, she married another, the father of her son.

After her second husband was also killed she married a third ISIS fighter but she "became disenchanted with the marriage," and decided to escape, the lawyer said.

Shibly, based in Tampa, Fla., said he intends to file a legal challenge to the government's decision to deny her entry to the country.

Muthana's status had been considered by lawyers from the departments of State and Justice since her case arose, according to one U.S. official who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The official would not elaborate but said Pompeo's statement was based on the lawyers' conclusions.

The State Department declined to disclose details about her father or Muthana's case, citing privacy

Britain to revoke the citizenship of 'ISIS bride'

The Washington Post

LONDON — Britain has said that it is revoking the citizenship of Shamima Begum, a teenager who four years ago fled to become an "ISIS bride" and has attracted widespread public attention for her effort to return home with her new baby.

The government's decision came as Islamic State was losing the last of its territory in Syria and countries across Europe are struggling with what to do about their citizens who went to fight on behalf of the terrorist group.

The British Home Office informed Begum's family members of its decision in a letter Tuesday and asked them to make their daughter aware of the potential for her to appeal.

"It's kind of heartbreaking to read," a teary Begum, 19, told an ITV News reporter who showed her a copy of the letter. "My family made it sound

like it would be a lot easier for me to come back to the U.K. when I was speaking to them in Baghdad. It's kind of hard to swallow."

Begum is living in a Syrian refugee camp, where she gave birth to a boy last weekend. Her baby also has potential claims of British citizenship.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid told Parliament on Wednesday, "Children should not suffer, so if a parent loses their British citizenship it does not affect the rights of their child."

Under British law, the home secretary can revoke citizenship if it is "conducive to the public good" and if it does not make a person stateless. More than 100 dual nationals were stripped of their British citizenship in 2017.

If Begum did return to Britain, she could face prosecution for joining a terrorist organization.

she once held a U.S. passport.

In a letter released by Shibly, Muthana wrote that she made "a big mistake" by rejecting her family and friends in the United States to join ISIS.

"To say that I regret my past words, any pain that I caused my family and any concerns I would cause my country would be hard for me to really express properly," she wrote

Bomber: Soldier's lawsuit claims contractor enabled suicide bomber

FROM FRONT PAGE

About an hour after his shift ended, Ahmad Nayeib detonated his vest on the base and killed himself along with three U.S. soldiers and two Fluor employees, who were Americans. Another 16 people, including Hencely, were wounded.

"Fluor's negligent supervision of the bomber enabled the bomber's attack against the Army," says the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Greenville, S.C., one of Fluor's U.S. locations. It added that "Fluor well knew that in Afghanistan, and on American military bases in particular, suicide bombers were a constant and dire threat."

The lawsuit seeks unspecified monetary damages from the company.

A Fluor spokesman, Brett Turner, said Wednesday that the company had no immediate comment.

The company was responsible for upkeep of nontactical vehicles at Bagram at the time of the attack. Nayeib worked in the vehicle yard, disposing of motor oil and other potentially hazardous automotive materials.

Hencely, of Springfield, Ga.,

was deployed to the U.S. base in Afghanistan as a soldier in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division.

Soldiers were gathering for the start of a Veterans Day foot race, the lawsuit says, when Hencely noticed Nayeib and thought he looked suspicious. The soldier grabbed Nayeib, who detonated an explosive vest beneath his clothes.

An Army investigation later found that a "lack of reasonable supervision facilitated Nayeib's ability to freely acquire most of the components necessary for the construction of the suicide vest and the freedom of movement to complete its construction," according to the military's 2017 report on the bombing.

Nayeib smuggled explosive materials used in his suicide vest onto the base, the lawsuit said, and completed it during his work shifts using string and an electrical switch from the Fluor work site as well as nuts and bolts used for shrapnel. Fluor staffers also allowed the bomber to check out a multimeter used to measure electrical currents, though the tool wasn't needed to perform his job.

Hencely suffered serious brain injuries and shrapnel wounds to his chest from the blast.

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MILITARY

Yongsan moves to control stray cat issue

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

YONGSAN GARRISON, South Korea — U.S. military officials plan to launch a program aimed at slowing the growth of the stray cat population on this Army installation in the heart of Seoul.

The program — known as trap, neuter, release, or TNR — was deemed necessary after the number of cats spiked as the military prepares to close Yongsan. Last year, U.S. Forces Korea moved its main headquarters from Yongsan south to Camp Humphreys.

"TNR is the humane and potentially effective approach for stray and feral cats by which community cats are humanely trapped ... brought to a veterinarian to be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, ear tipped, and then returned to the outdoor location where they were found," according to the new policy issued this month.

Kerri Burrows, 38, a military spouse with training as a vet technician and some two decades working in animal welfare, will spearhead the effort.

She noticed the problem after moving to Yongsan with her husband in July and persuaded garrison officials to change the policy so she could release the cats back where they came from after the neuter operation.

Her next task will be to persuade people who have been secretly feeding the cats, including several South Koreans who work on the garrison, to stop and help her. She's also working with a local shelter to organize veteri-



KIM GAMEL/Stars and Stripes

Officials at Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, South Korea, have estimated that the Army installation has about 70 stray cats, and they want to contain the problem before that number multiplies in the spring.

narians to perform the surgeries.

"Now it's really just hitting the streets and trying to connect with the feeders," she told Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

In the past, the Department of Public Works would capture the strays, then take them to the vet clinic on Yongsan where they would be placed in an adoption program or euthanized, depending on their condition.

The situation has been in limbo

since veterinary services have largely moved to Humphreys, leaving the garrison with nowhere to take the strays. South Korea has animal shelters, but they are already crowded.

"There's going to be some difficulty because the process for a long time has been that the cats get trapped and then euthanized," Burrows said. "I need to show people that we're choosing the more humane option."

Once connected, Burrows will establish a feeding schedule that will help her trap the cats, which will begin a three-day process comprising the surgery and providing recovery time before they are returned to their outdoor location.

"After that, I'm going to be instructing the people to wean the cats off the food because we are vacating this property, so we can't have the cats dependent on

the food," she said.

The policy prohibits random feeding or tipping traps to prevent the cats' capture.

Yongsan garrison spokesman Wes Hayes said people will be advised to contact Burrows to gain authorization to participate in the program. Her local cellphone number is 010-5693-6605 and her email is kdurrr1@hotmail.com.

"She obviously has a lot of expertise in this area and we're grateful that Kerri is volunteering that expertise to assist in sterilizing the feral cat population," he said.

Officials estimate the garrison has about 70 stray cats, although it's impossible to be certain. They want to contain the problem before that number multiplies when kitten season begins in the spring.

The policy also requires a strict registration process for people bringing pets to South Korea, addressing concerns that the problem was caused at least in part by people leaving cats behind.

It's not known how many of the cats have been abandoned or lost versus those that are endemic to the base, which has been occupied by the U.S. military since shortly before the 1950-53 Korean War and was home to the Japanese imperial army before that.

What is certain is that the cats have become more visible and emboldened as Yongsan Garrison shrinks as the military prepares to return the land to the South Korean government, which is expected to turn it into a park.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @kimgamel

Senator demands review of Guard's sexual harassment, assault policies

By TODD RICHMOND
Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — A powerful Wisconsin legislator has demanded a detailed review of the state National Guard's sexual harassment and assault policies after meeting with a soldier who alleges she was sexually harassed and the man wasn't punished.

U.S. Air Force investigators are already investigating allegations of sexual assault and harassment within a Wisconsin Air National Guard security unit at the urging of Democratic U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin.

State Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, a Republican, wrote Tuesday to the Wisconsin National Guard's top commander, Maj. Gen. Donald Dunbar, requesting "a thorough review" of sexual harassment and sexual assault policies.

He asked for a detailed account of measures already in place and any recommendations for strengthening them. He also demanded information on the National Guard's sexual harassment and sexual assault prevention efforts.

Guard spokeswoman Jackie Halverson said in an email to The Associated Press on Wednesday that the letter has been received and leaders will be

getting back to Fitzgerald. She didn't say when or offer any other details on whether they would comply.

"As I'm sure you know, the Wisconsin National Guard takes all allegations of sexual assault, harassment or misconduct seriously, and we do not tolerate it in our ranks," she said.

The AP obtained a letter the woman wrote to Fitzgerald in January from Jay Ellis, a master sergeant in the security unit whose allegations of harassment in the squadron sparked Baldwin's intervention.

The woman's name was redacted from the document. She wrote that she informed her brigade leaders twice in 2014 that a master sergeant had been sexually harassing and inappropriately touching her and her colleagues for months.

An investigator and rank reduction board found the master sergeant had acted inappropriately, but he was allowed to retire with no punishment and was later hired back as a contractor, the woman wrote. Meanwhile, she said she was "slandered, libeled and ostracized" in retaliation.

She did not identify the man or offer any examples of retaliation beyond saying she was kept on probation for six

years when the authorized length is three.

She said the man went unpunished until she approached then-Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch's office in 2017 and the man was removed from his position.

Baldwin made her request for an investigation in November after Ellis contacted her office and said he had learned of six incidents of sexual harassment or assault against female squadron members between 2002 and 2016. He alleged that high-ranking commanders have done little to address the issues.

Ellis told the AP he had no documentation of the incidents because the women didn't file formal complaints. One of the women told the AP in an interview, however, that she and a friend were sexually assaulted by superior officers in the squadron during a 2002 party at a Las Vegas training base.

Alec Zimmerman, Fitzgerald's spokesman, said Fitzgerald and his staff met with the woman who wrote to him at the end of January and Fitzgerald "felt it necessary to request that Major General Dunbar send a report back to the Legislature."

Fitzgerald spent 27 years in the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring in 2009 as a lieutenant colonel.

Guardsman accused of impersonating agent

By CHRIS LIBONATI
Syracuse (N.Y.) Media Group

CICERO, N.Y. — Police said a drone camera operator for the Air National Guard impersonated a CIA agent to impress a woman.

Ryan R. Houghtalen, 25, was charged with second-degree impersonation of a public servant, a misdemeanor. Houghtalen told the woman he met at church her life was in danger because he was a CIA agent and that they were both targets of Islamic State, according to court documents.

Houghtalen enlisted in the New York Air National Guard in January 2012 and is a staff sergeant with the 174th Attack Wing, based at Hancock Field, said Eric Durr, a guard spokesman.

Houghtalen serves as a sensor operator on the MQ-9, the Reaper, Durr said. A sensor operator runs the camera on a drone, according to the Air Force's description.

The 174th Attack Wing pilots the Reaper drones on combat and surveillance missions overseas. The base is also a maintenance and training facility for the squadron of drones. It was the first Air National Guard base to operate the drones.

Sensor operators do not have to have prior flight experience. They must complete a background check, go through about 10 weeks of basic military training and must be between 17 and 39 years old, according to the Air Force's website.

Though Durr could not speak specifically about Houghtalen's case, Durr said a guard member convicted of a crime in civilian court can face punishment by the Guard. Durr said, among other possible punishments, a person could be fined or their rank reduced.

NATION

Dems prepare resolution against Trump declaration

By ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Democrats will file a resolution Friday aimed at blocking the national emergency declaration that President Donald Trump has issued to help finance his wall along the Southwest border, teeing up a clash over billions of dollars, immigration policy and the Constitution's separation of powers.

Though the effort seems almost certain to ultimately fall short — perhaps to a Trump veto — the votes will let Democrats take a defiant stance against Trump that they sure to please liberal voters. They will also put some Republicans

from swing districts and states in a difficult spot.

Formally introducing the measure sets up a vote by the full House likely by mid-March, perhaps as soon as next week, because of a timeline spelled out by law. Initial passage by the Democratic-run House seems assured. The measure would then move to the Republican-controlled Senate, where there may be enough GOP defections for approval. The law that spells out the rules for emergency declarations seems to require the Senate to address the issue too, but there's never been a congressional effort to block one and some procedural uncertainties remain.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., seemed to predict approval, telling colleagues in a letter that her chamber will “move swiftly” to pass it and “the resolution will be referred to the Senate and then sent to the President's desk.”

Should the House and Senate initially approve the measure, Congress seems unlikely to muster the two-thirds majorities in each chamber that would be needed later to override a certain Trump veto.

Even so, Republican senators facing tough 2020 re-election fights in competitive states like Arizona, Colorado and North Carolina would have to take stances that could risk dividing



MANUEL BALCE CENETIA/AP

President Donald Trump gestures as visiting Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz leaves the White House in Washington following their meeting Wednesday.

the GOP's pro-Trump and more moderate voters.

Moderate Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, said Wednesday she would back a resolution blocking the declaration, making her the first Republican to publicly state her support for the effort to thwart the emergency. With Republicans holding a 53-47 majority, three

more GOP senators would need to vote with Democrats for the resolution to win initial approval.

Speaking Tuesday about a suit filed by 16 state attorneys general challenging the declaration, Trump said he expected to do “very well” in the case and said he had an “absolute right” to make the declaration.

Report: Government share of health tab approaches one-half

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Even without a history-making health care remake to deliver “Medicare-for-all,” government at all levels will be paying nearly half the nation's health care bill in less than 10 years, according to a federal report released Wednesday.

The government growth is driven by traditional Medicare, which is experiencing a surge in enrollment as aging baby boomers shift out of private coverage,

according to the analysis from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Federal, state and local governments will be paying 47 percent of the nation's health care costs in 2027, up from 45 percent currently, the report said.

The report did not consider the potential impact of “Medicare-for-all” national health insurance plans from Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sand-

ers and other liberals. Nor did it delve into a financial rescue of traditional Medicare that could become a pressing political priority for all sides in just a few years. Medicare's trustees have said the program will be insolvent in seven years when its giant trust fund for inpatient care won't be able to fully cover expected medical bills.

Spelling out the economic consequences of current laws and policies, the report serves as a reality check on the politi-

cal debate over health care. That debate ranges from President Donald Trump's warnings about lurking “socialism” to the suggestion from Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., a 2020 contender, that the U.S. can simply “move on” to a new taxpayer-financed system that would cover all Americans.

The report projected that U.S. health care spending will surpass \$5.9 trillion in 2027, growing to represent more than 19 percent of the economy.

Health care spending is expect-

ed to increase somewhat more rapidly than overall economic growth from 2018 to 2027, underscoring an ingrained affordability problem for government, employers and U.S. households.

Rising prices for health care goods and services are expected to account for nearly half the spending growth, said the report, with the rest driven by a mix of factors, including an aging population and more intensive use of services.

Muslim group calling for congressional probe of the FBI's terrorist watchlist

By MATTHEW BARAKAT
Associated Press

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — A Muslim civil rights group called for a congressional investigation Wednesday after its lawsuit revealed that the U.S. government has shared access to parts of its terrorist watchlist with more than 1,400 private entities, including hospitals and universities.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations said Congress should look into why the FBI has given such wide access to the list, which CAIR believes is riddled with errors.

Broad dissemination of the names makes life more difficult for those who are wrongly included, CAIR says. Many on the list are believed to be Muslim.

“This is a wholesale profiling of a religious minority community,” said CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad. “To share private information of citizens and noncitizens with corporations is illegal and outrageous.”

The FBI said in a statement Wednesday night that private

groups receive only a subset of the terrorist watchlist called the Known or Suspected Terrorist List.

It is unclear how significantly that narrows the list from the watchlist, which is formally known as the Terrorist Screening Center Database and includes hundreds of thousands of names.

Gadeir Abbas, lawyer for CAIR, said there is no evidence that the list of Known or Suspected Terrorists, or KST, is in any meaningful way less broad than the overall watchlist.

A hearing is scheduled in federal court for Friday on CAIR's request that the government now detail exactly which entities have received access to the names.

CAIR also wants to know what private organizations are doing

with the watchlist information — whether, for example, it is influencing universities' admissions decisions or is being used by hospitals to screen would-be visitors.

In depositions and in court hearings, government officials had denied until very recently that the watchlist compiled by the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center is shared with private entities.

Despite that assurance, the judge ordered the government to be more specific about how it disseminates the watchlist.

U.S. District Judge Anthony Trenga said the plaintiffs are entitled to the information to try to prove their case that inclusion on the list causes them to suffer “real world consequences.”

In response to the judge's order, TSC Deputy Director of Operations Timothy Groh filed a statement earlier this month acknowledging that 1,441 private entities have received permission to access the watchlist.

Climate skeptic designated to organize climate panel

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is exploring the idea of forming a special committee to look at climate change and security risks, with the effort being coordinated by a 79-year-old physicist who rejects mainstream climate science.

A “discussion paper” obtained by The Associated Press asks federal officials from an array of government agencies to weigh in on a proposed executive order that President Donald Trump would sign establishing the “Presidential Committee on Climate Security.”

A memo to those federal officials asks them to direct any questions to William Happer, a member of Trump's National Security Council and a well-known critic of mainstream climate science findings.

“Happer would be a fringe figure even for climate skeptics,” said retired U.S. Navy Rear Adm. David Titley, now a professor of meteorology at Pennsylvania State University.

Harvard science historian

Naomi Oreskes, who wrote the book “Merchants of Doubt” on climate denial, pointed to instances when Happer has claimed that carbon dioxide, the main heat-trapping gas from the burning of coal, oil and gas, is good for humans and that carbon emissions have been demonized like “the poor Jews under Hitler.”

The National Security Council advises the president on security and foreign policy issues. According to the discussion paper, the council would fund and oversee the committee.

Among the committee's responsibilities would be to “address existing United States Government reports on climate for scientific accuracy and advise on the national security implications of climate change.”

The committee would be composed of 12 members, according to a draft of the executive order. Members would include experts in national security and climate science. The panel would advise the president on how climate “might change in the future under natural and human influences.”



Abbas

NATION

Those on list express relief and concern

By KATIE METTLER

The Washington Post

As part of his plot to "kill almost every last person on the earth," authorities say a U.S. Coast Guard lieutenant and self-identified white nationalist compiled a hit list of prominent politicians and cable TV journalists.

Christopher Paul Hasson was taken into custody after federal investigators uncovered a cache of weapons and ammunition in his Maryland home. Hasson had been stockpiling the supplies since at least 2017, according to court documents, and had developed a spreadsheet with his alleged targets.

Among them was former Rep. Joe Scarborough, R-Fla., who now co-hosts an MSNBC show and has been a target of President Donald Trump's disdain. The list also included two of Scarborough's MSNBC colleagues, hosts Chris Hayes and Ari Melber, and CNN's Don Lemon, Chris Cuomo and Van Jones.

Since he took office, Trump has regularly called the work of mainstream journalism organizations "fake news" and accused political journalists, without evidence, of dishonest reporting. He has often referred to journalists as the "enemy of the people."

Trump revived the enemy line on Wednesday, criticizing a New York Times report that said he asked then-acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker whether a perceived loyalist could be in charge of an investigation into hush money paid to women during the 2016 campaign. "The New York Times reporting is false," Trump said in a morning tweet. "They are a true ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE!"

It's exactly what Donald Trump is encouraging," Scarborough said during his show Thursday morning while addressing Hasson's alleged plot.

This is the second time in recent months that prominent politicians, Trump critics and TV journalists have been targeted by domestic terrorists. In the fall, a 36-year-old Florida man was charged with sending 13 homemade pipe bombs to Hillary Clinton, former President Barack Obama, CNN and others.

Journalists around the world face constant threats and dangers: 88 journalists and media workers were killed in 2018, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. That includes five people at The Capital newspaper in Annapolis, Md., where they were gunned down less than a year ago.

This is how some of the cable TV hosts on Hasson's alleged hit list reacted so far:

■ Don Lemon, CNN, on his Feb. 20 show:

"We are all safe, and we thank the Coast Guard and law enforcement for stopping this in time. But we need to talk about why. Once again, critics of the president are being targeted with violence. ... These things don't happen in a vacuum. The president's words

Terrorist: Coast Guard announces arrest with no further comment

FROM FRONT PAGE

Hasson was arrested on illegal weapons and drug charges on Friday, but the government says those charges are the "probable tip of the iceberg." Officials with the U.S. attorney's office in Maryland outlined in court documents Hasson's alleged plans to spark chaos and destruction, describing a man obsessed with neo-fascist and neo-Nazi views.

"Please send me your violence that I may unleash it onto their heads," Hasson wrote in a letter that prosecutors say was found in his email drafts. "Guide my hate to make a lasting impression on this world."

A magistrate judge ordered that the Office of the Federal Public Defender represent Hasson; the office declined comment Wednesday.

Hasson has been working at the U.S. Coast Guard headquarters in Washington since 2010, according to court documents filed by prosecutors. He also served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1988 to 1993 and in the Army National Guard for about two years in the mid-'90s.

Agents with the FBI field office in Baltimore and the Coast Guard Investigative Service arrested Hasson on Friday, FBI Baltimore spokesman Dave Fitz confirmed.

A Coast Guard spokesman, Lt. Cmdr. Scott McBride, said Wednesday that Hasson no longer works at Coast Guard headquarters.

"An active duty Coast Guard member stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C., was arrested last week on illegal weapons and drug charges as a result of an ongoing investigation led by Coast Guard Investigation Services, in cooperation with the FBI and the Dept. of Justice," McBride said in a written statement. McBride declined to comment further, citing the open investigation.

Court documents do not detail what prompted federal law enforcement to begin investigating Hasson, but they say Hasson has been studying the 1,500-page manifesto of right-wing terrorist Anders Behring Breivik, who unleashed two attacks in 2011 that killed 77 in Norway. They say Hasson's attack preparations resembled

matter. Just look at the suspect's list of targets."

■ Chris Cuomo, CNN, talking to Anderson Cooper on Feb. 20:

According to Yahoo: "This is scary. This is something that the people who get named, we have to deal with, especially with our family because while we accept it as just the nature of the world we live in these days, my brother, this is very scary to the people and the



KEVIN HAGEN/AP

One reference in a spreadsheet seized from Christopher Paul Hasson's home seems to be about Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y.

Breivik's.

The manifesto outlined how Breivik planned and prepared his attacks with the aim of providing an outline for others planning similar terrorist operations, the U.S. court filings say.

Breivik took steroids and narcotics, believing it would heighten his abilities to carry out attacks. When law enforcement raided Hasson's apartment, they said they found a locked container loaded with more than 30 vials of what appeared to be human growth hormones. He has also ordered more than 4,200 pills of the narcotic Tramadol since 2016, along with synthetic urine to allegedly bypass possible random drug screenings at work, they said.

Breivik encouraged identifying targets and traitors. In recent weeks, they said, Hasson developed a spreadsheet of targets that included top Democratic congressional leaders and media personalities. The list includes "JOEY," what prosecutors say is a reference to former Rep. Joe Scarborough, R-Fla., who works for MSNBC; "cortez," an alleged reference to freshman Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y.; and "Sen blumen jertz," presumably about Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.

little ones at home. So we've got to deal with that."

■ Chris Hayes, MSNBC, on Twitter:

"Remember when one of the president's most devoted, obsessed fans tried to murder like 20 of the president's most prominent political foes?"

"... Just a crazed right-wing nut with an enormous cache of weapons and a hit list of media



RICHARD SHOTWELL, INVISION/VIA AP

The name of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., is also on the spreadsheet.

The filing was first reported Wednesday afternoon by the Program on Extremism at George Washington University.

Authorities seized 15 firearms, including several long guns and rifles, and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition from his basement apartment after executing a search warrant this month. Over the past two years, he had made nearly two dozen purchases of firearms or related equipment and made thousands of visits to websites that sell weapons or tactical gear.

Authorities said Hasson harbored extremist views for years.

"The defendant is a domestic terrorist," the government said in court filings, "bent, on committing acts dangerous to human life that are intended to affect governmental conduct."

In an email he drafted in June 2017, he contemplated biological attacks and targeted food supplies, according to court filings. He considered the merits of a "bombing/sniper campaign" and included a "Things to do" list that included purchasing land "out west or possibly NC mtms" for family and researching tactics used during the civil war in Ukraine.

"During unrest target both sides to increase tension," Hasson wrote in the email, according to the court filings. "In other

words provoke gov/police to over react which should help to escalate violence. BLM protests or other left crap would be ideal to incite to violence."

In another letter drafted months later to an American neo-Nazi leader, Hasson called for a "white homeland." He sent the letter to himself nearly two months after the neo-Nazi rally in Charlottesville, Va., where torch-carrying white-supremacists clashed with anti-racist protesters.

"I never saw a reason for mass protest or wearing uniforms marching around provoking people with swastikas etc.," Hasson said in the letter, according to court filings. "I was and am a man of action you cannot change minds protesting like that. However you can make change with a little focused violence."

Hasson's commitment to destruction appeared to decrease in recent weeks, according to details from prosecutors. He created a list of "traitors" and targets on Jan. 19 in a spreadsheet on his work computer, they said, which was created two days after he conducted a series of internet inquiries:

8:54 a.m.: "what if Trump illegally impeached"

8:57 a.m.: "best place in dc to see congress people"

8:58 a.m.: "where in dc to congress live"

10:39 a.m.: "civil war if trump impeached"

11:26 a.m.: "social democrats usa"

The arrest marks the second time that the Coast Guard has responded to an incident involving alleged white supremacy in recent months. In September, the service reprimanded a worker who flashed what some people identified as a white-supremacy sign in the background of a televised interview with another officer during the response to Hurricane Florence.

"We are aware of the offensive video on twitter — the Coast Guard has identified the member and removed him from the response," the service said at the time in a tweet. "His actions do not reflect those of the United States Coast Guard."

That individual was not identified.

personalities and prominent Democrats."

■ Joe Scarborough, MSNBC, on his Feb. 21 show

"Donald Trump has been warned repeatedly that talking about enemies of the people is a Stalinist phrase, that it will encourage some of his more unhinged followers."

"We've all known that Donald Trump and his words and his at-

tacks about enemies of the people would lead to this type of behavior. This is now the second time that we know about, from the pipe bombs to yesterday, but yesterday was obviously far more specific, far more dangerous. And you know, it's exactly what Donald Trump is encouraging."

NATION

Police: Actor staged attack to help career

By DON BABWIN
Associated Press

CHICAGO — “Empire” actor Jussie Smollett staged a racist and homophobic attack because he was unhappy about his salary and wanted to promote his career, Chicago’s police superintendent said Thursday.

Before the attack, Smollett also sent a threatening letter that targeted himself to the studio in Chicago where “Empire” is shot, Superintendent Eddie Johnson said.

Smollett turned himself in and was arrested earlier Thursday to face accusations that he filed a false police report when he told authorities he was attacked in Chicago by two men who hurled racist and anti-gay slurs and looped a rope around his neck, police said.

“He took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career,” Johnson told reporters at a news conference.

“This publicity stunt was a scar that Chicago didn’t earn and certainly didn’t deserve,” he later added.

The FBI has been investigating the letter sent before the attack. Johnson would not say whether Smollett could face charges for that.

In less than a month, Smollett changed from being the seemingly sympathetic victim of a hate crime to being accused of fabricating the entire thing. The 36-year-old was charged Wednesday with felony disorderly conduct, a charge that could bring up to three years in prison and force the actor, who is black and gay, to pay for the cost of the investigation into his report of a Jan. 29 beating.

Johnson announced Thursday that po-



ASHLEE REZIN, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES/AP

Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson, center, appears at a press conference at CPD headquarters in Chicago on Thursday after actor Jussie Smollett turned himself in on charges of disorderly conduct and filing a false police report.

lice treated Smollett as a victim until two brothers they had taken into custody for questioning last week admitted to helping him stage the attack. He said it was the brothers who also explained Smollett’s motive to detectives. Authorities have a check for \$3,500 that Smollett paid the brothers, he said.

Smollett, who plays a gay character on the hit Fox television show “Empire,” said he was attacked as he was walking home from a downtown St. Louis sandwich shop. He said the masked men beat him, made derogatory comments and yelled “This is MAGA country” — an apparent reference to President Donald Trump’s campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again” —

before fleeing.

In describing what police believe actually happened, Johnson made it sound as if Smollett was casting and directing a short movie.

“He probably knew he needed somebody with bulk,” he said of Smollett’s decision to hire the two muscular brothers. Police have said at least one of the brothers worked on “Empire,” which follows a black family as they navigate the ups and downs of the recording industry, and Smollett’s attorneys said one of the men is the actor’s personal trainer.

When it came time to stage the attack, Johnson said, Smollett chose a spot that he believed would be captured by one of Chi-

cago’s many security cameras. “But, unfortunately, that particular camera wasn’t pointed in that direction,” Johnson said.

The brothers, who are not considered suspects, wore gloves during the staged attack and “punched him a little bit,” Johnson said. Scratches and bruising Smollett had on his face were “most likely self-inflicted,” Johnson said.

In a statement Wednesday, attorneys Todd Pugh and Victor Henderson said Smollett “enjoys the presumption of innocence, particularly when there has been an investigation like this one where information, both true and false, has been repeatedly leaked.”

Detectives found the two brothers after reviewing hundreds of hours of video. They released images of two people they said they wanted to question and last week picked up the brothers at O’Hare International Airport as they returned from Nigeria. Police questioned the men and searched their apartment.

The brothers, who were identified by their attorney as Abimbola “Abel” and Olabinjo “Ola” Osundairo, were held for nearly 48 hours on suspicion of assaulting Smollett.

The brothers appeared before a grand jury on Wednesday to “lock in their testimony,” according to police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi. Smollett was charged by prosecutors, not the grand jury.

Speaking outside the courthouse where the grand jury met, the brothers’ attorney said the two men testified for about 2½ hours.

“There was a point where this story needed to be told, and they manned up and they said we’re going to correct this,” Gloria Schmidt said.

She said her clients did not care about a plea deal or immunity.

“You don’t need immunity when you have the truth,” she said.

VA says use of gender-neutral motto a ‘mistake’

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs made a mistake — not a policy change — Tuesday when it published a gender-neutral version of its motto on official event programs, an agency spokesman said.

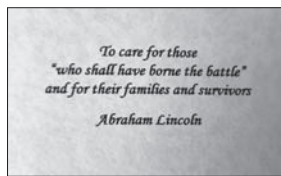
The altered motto was published in the back of programs provided at VA headquarters in Washington during the launch of a new benefits appeals process. It read, “To care for those ‘who shall have borne the battle’ and for their families and survivors,” and was attributed to President Abraham Lincoln.

The agency’s official motto is a quote from Lincoln’s second inaugural address in 1865: “To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.”

VA spokesman Randal Noller said Wednesday the altered version used Tuesday was “simply a mistake.”

“The language on the program is incorrect,” read a VA-provided statement. “VA’s policy on the use of Lincoln’s direct quote as our mission statement remains unchanged ... and is consistent with the views of many veterans.”

The motto, which has been the same for nearly 60 years, has been a point of recent controversy. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of



NIKKI WENTLING/Stars and Stripes

This altered motto was published in the back of programs provided at Department of Veterans Affairs headquarters in Washington.

America, a national veterans organization, described the motto as sexist, outdated and exclusionary and has fought to change it since 2017.

Two House lawmakers sought to make the change official. Reps. Kathleen Rice, D-N.Y., and Brian Mast, R-Fla., introduced legislation to have the motto read: “To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise to care for those ‘who shall have borne the battle’ and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.” There was little movement on the bill before the end of the 115th Congress.

The VA rejected the idea of changing the motto and insisted it would continue to use the original Lincoln quote. In July 2018, then-VA acting Chief of Staff Jacquelyn Hayes-Byrd issued an agencywide message telling all employees to not paraphrase or alter the motto on official documents or anything else.

Writing, nikki@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @nikkiwentling

Vandals may have mistaken statue of vet for Robert E. Lee

By ANTONIA NOORI FARZAN
The Washington Post

Just outside downtown Dunn, N.C., a historic antebellum-style house honors Maj. Gen. William C. Lee, a hometown hero often described as the father of the U.S. Army’s airborne infantry.

The World War II veteran served as the first commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division, nicknamed the “Screaming Eagles,” and helped plan the Allied forces’ D-Day invasion of Normandy.

He’s a widely respected, if somewhat obscure, military figure — which is why, after anonymous vandals attempted to torch a statue of him last week, museum officials concluded that it had been a case of mistaken identity. They suspect that the perpetrators thought they were burning a memorial to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee.

“This is not a Civil War museum and this is not Robert E. Lee,” Mark Johnson, the curator for the Maj. Gen. William C. Lee Airborne Museum, told Raleigh’s CBS affiliate WCNC on Tuesday. “This is General William C. Lee from United States Army Airborne from World War II.”

Dunn is a city of less than 10,000 people in the greater Raleigh-Durham area, where some of the most heated

debates over removing Confederate memorials have taken place in recent years. In August 2017, protesters in Durham took matters into their own hands by toppling a bronze statue depicting a Confederate soldier that sat in front of the city’s old courthouse.

While the vandals who targeted the memorial to William C. Lee last week didn’t leave anything behind that would explain their motivation, Johnson told the Daily Record that he thought they were trying to make a similar statement about racism and slavery.

“So, just an alert to people who may be thinking about such things,” he said, “this is the wrong general.”

In a Facebook post, the museum said that the fire had started around 10 p.m. Feb. 14, after some “jerk punks” doused the statue with a flammable liquid. A ring of burn marks on the pedestal appeared to show where the fuel container had been set down.

Fire crews responded and put out the flames, which failed to do any significant structural damage to the white marble statue but left it blackened and scorched.

Authorities are reviewing security camera footage from the area to see if they can identify the culprits. Raleigh’s NBC affiliate WRAL reported.

NATION

Storm wreaks havoc on large portion of US



Z LONG, THE (OMAHA, NEB.) WORLD-HERALD/AP

Snow is lofted into the air as cleanup begins after a winter storm Wednesday in Omaha, Neb.



THOMAS WELLS, NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI DAILY JOURNAL/AP

A bicycle sits in more than 6 inches of water in the front yard of a home in Saffilo, Miss., on Wednesday.



ANTHONY PEZZOTTI, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/AP

A pedestrian is framed between broken Septa bus stop glass as snow falls in Philadelphia on Wednesday.

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A sprawling storm dumped several inches of snow from the Midwest to the East Coast and deluged the South with rain Wednesday as it closed schools, snarled air travel and littered highways with crashes.

Only a few inches of snow fell along the Interstate 95 corridor from New York to Washington, but it was enough to put a scare into an area that has seen little of it this winter. Schools and government offices around the region closed early.

New Jersey's governor declared a state of emergency even though only 4 inches of snow was expected before turning to rain Wednesday night. State and local government offices in Delaware closed early, and so did local offices in Philadelphia.

But the evening commute started out on a good note. A spokesperson for AAA Mid-Atlantic had said earlier in the afternoon it appeared motorists heeded warnings to stay off roads.

Nationwide, more than 2,200 flights were canceled and more than 5,500 were delayed, according to the flight-tracking website FlightAware. The mid-Atlantic region was hit especially hard as airlines pulled flights ahead of the storm. Washington's Reagan National Airport led the pack.

"Travel anymore is not easy, so you expect the unexpected," said Stacy Flye, who was trying to get home to Florida. "And, you know, we knew the weather was going to be bad, but sometimes you just have to take your chances."

Amtrak made changes to its Keystone service between New York and Harrisburg, Pa. Multiple crashes, including a jackknifed tractor-trailer, shut down westbound lanes of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in Lancaster County.

Farther west, snow forced Minneapolis and St. Paul schools and scores of other districts in Minnesota and Wisconsin to cancel classes as up to 10 inches of snow fell on the region.

Schools, businesses and government offices in Kansas closed or announced plans to start late. Several school districts closed in Missouri, where officials said many roads across the northern half of the state were partially or completely snow-covered.

The storm produced heavy rain and flash floods in parts of the Deep South. Water covered roads in parts of eastern Mississippi and northern Alabama.

Creeks swelled in Tennessee, and about 2 inches of rain fell Tuesday and Wednesday at Nashville International Airport. As much as 8 inches of rain is expected through Saturday.

Bottle of ale from 1886 shipwreck ferments conflict, quickly resolved

By MARY ESCH
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — News that an upstate New York brewer planned to recreate ale from a bottle salvaged from a 133-year-old shipwreck gave a scare to a scuba-diving Long Island brewer who has already done it.

Jamie Adams, owner of Saint James Brewery in Holbrook, said Wednesday he plans to release his new ale next month. He created it from yeast he painstakingly cultured from bottles of English ale he salvaged in 2017 from the wreck of the SS Oregon, which sank off Fire Island in 1886.

Adams, who has been diving the 135-foot-deep wreck for nearly 20 years, was stunned when he saw an Associated Press story over the weekend describing another brewer's plans to use the

Oregon yeast.

"One of the divers I had enlisted to help me find these bottles with the intent of making beer had given one of them to this other brewer, unbeknownst to me," Adams said.

Adams learned about it when State University of New York at Cobleskill announced that students were trying to culture yeast from a shipwreck bottle given to Bill Felter, of Serious Brewing in Howes Cave. The plan was for Felter to create a new beer if the students were successful.

"I called Felter and he has agreed not to use the yeast," Adams said. "I'm glad we could work it out amicably without my having to take legal action."

Felter told the Syracuse Post-Standard he's scuttled his plans out of respect for his fellow farm

brewer. "I don't want to step on their toes."

The Oregon is "near and dear to Long Island scuba divers," said Adams, a former Wall Street trader who took up brewing and diving after 9/11. "It was the Titanic of its day. It was built as a luxury liner to ferry people between New York and Europe."

The wreck is 75 percent buried in sand, which shifts after storms to uncover various portions of the ship.

"In 2017 we found the area around the first class dining room was accessible. It hadn't been for years," Adams said.

Adams and fellow divers used a dredge to uncover artifacts including china, silverware and bottles of ale with corks intact. Through research, he determined the bottles contained classic English ale.



COURTESY OF JAMIE ADAMS/AP

Bottles recovered from the SS Oregon, a 133-year-old shipwreck, are shown at Saint James Brewery in Holbrook, N.Y., in 2017.

"We've opened a few and have been able to propagate a few different yeast strains," he said.

After making numerous test batches since 2017, Adams had a yeast strain he was confident

would perform properly.

"We're calling it SeaKing New York Ale," Adams said.

It's set to debut March 9 at the annual New York Craft Brewers Festival in Albany.

VETERANS

Remembering a friend lost in Vietnam War

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — David Nelson and Lee Roy Herron operated on parallel tracks for most of their early lives. In Lubbock, Texas, the two attended the same junior high and high schools before moving on to study at Texas Technical College, now Texas Tech University. After graduating in 1967, both commissioned as officers in the U.S. Marine Corps, traveling together for Officer Candidate School and their final physical exams.

Then their paths diverged.

Nelson said he had no real interest in fighting in the Vietnam War and chose to become a judge advocate, sending him to study law instead of into battle. Herron, however, was eager to get to the front lines. Even after graduating from the Defense Language Institute, he turned down translator jobs to be an infantry officer in combat.

"When it came to defending our country, Lee Roy was over the top," said Nelson, now 74 and living in Houston. "He not only wanted to go into the Marine Corps after graduation, he wanted to serve on the front lines. That was the difference between us; I wouldn't have volunteered to go to Vietnam," he said.

Just a couple of months into Herron's tour of duty, he died at the hands of the enemy. Friday marks the 50th anniversary of his death.

Assuming his friend's death was another senseless loss of life, Nelson pushed Herron from his mind for decades. During a 1997 speech by now-deceased Col. Wesley Fox, who served with Herron in Vietnam, Nelson learned of Herron's heroism. Since then he's spent countless hours ensuring it is never again forgotten.

Battlefield heroism

Nelson and Herron's friendship was solid despite a competitive streak between the two. It began at a local spelling bee, where Nelson took first place, just ahead of

Herron.

Once during high school, the two were neck and neck in a softball throwing distance test. Nelson said he was in the lead with 85 yards when Herron stepped up and bested him with 90 yards.

"I can still in my mind recall the kind of whizzing noise a softball makes when you throw it really hard," Nelson said. He would think of that softball toss again while reading the citation for the Navy Cross that Herron received posthumously.



Nelson

On Feb. 22, 1969, as Herron's company was ambushed, the lieutenant threw a hand grenade, taking out an enemy machine gun. A supporting machine gun then hit Herron, killing him instantly while the lives of the other men were spared.

"If I didn't know what heroism there was on the battlefield, probably most of my high school classmates didn't know," Nelson said. "It sort of became an obsession of mine to do what I could to see him honored. I didn't really know where to start."

Over the past two decades, Nelson has written dozens of articles and a book on Herron; he's sent letters to presidents and published opinion pieces sharing his thoughts on current wars that always include Herron's story; and he worked with his former classmates to create an endowed scholarship at Texas Tech in 2001.

What began with an initial donation of about \$35,000 has grown to more than \$250,000. The Lee Roy Herron Memorial Scholarship Endowment at the university's Vietnam Center and Archive has helped send about 100 students to study in Vietnam as part of a monthlong summer program.

Steve Maxner, the center's director, said the scholarship's size is "incredible for any kind of scholarship at a university that has kind of a grassroots origin to it." He credits its success to Nelson's dedication to promoting and advocating for donations.

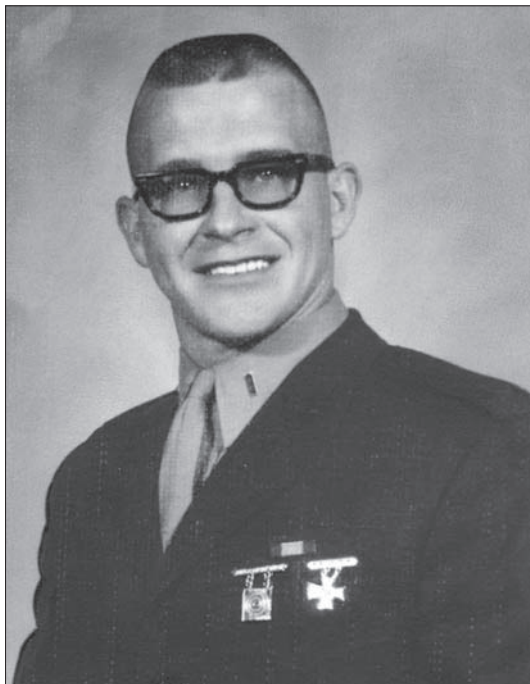
"We are so fortunate to have Americans who are so thoughtful in helping to educate young people in our country," Maxner said. "There are a lot of different ways you can do that, and certainly David Nelson and his classmates found a really powerful way to help our students better understand those nations where we were at war so many decades ago and those people and cultures. They become better Americans for it."

Students who receive scholarship funds for travel learn about the history behind the scholarship, he said. On the trip, students visit some of the battlefields where Herron served.

Preventing future loss

While much of Nelson's time is dedicated to preserving the past, it's also about protecting future servicemembers in combat. He has become a vocal advocate for ending the Afghanistan War, writing about its parallels to Vietnam.

"If our country had withdrawn months earlier, Herron's life and thousands of others could have been spared," Nelson wrote in the Washington Examiner this month. "And the results would have been the same



Photos courtesy of David Nelson

Lee Roy Herron in his Marine Corps uniform



This screenshot is from a home video taken June 7, 1967, the day David Nelson, right, and Lee Roy Herron commissioned as officers in the Marine Corps.

— North Vietnam would have taken over and occupied South Vietnam."

Looking at Afghanistan, he sees the same thing happening. He continued in his article to say: "Realistically, what chance is there in Afghanistan that the Taliban eventually will not take over and occupy most or all of the country? Will a slow withdrawal make any difference in the end, other than costing more of our nation's treasure and likely resulting in more American deaths?"

The war has gone on this long, Nelson said, because the majority of Americans are not affected by it.

"I feel like I'm just whistling in the wind," Nelson said. "Nobody pays attention to me, but at least I get it off my chest."

Nelson emails his published pieces to Herron's sister, Jane Herron Graham. Now 72, Graham said she appreciates everything Nelson has done in honor of her older brother.

"Every time we talk, he's been so loyal to this. That amazes me a lot," she said. "My brother would have said, 'Man, don't you have anything better to do?'"

thayer.rose@stripes.com
Twitter: @Rose_Lori



For most of his life, Lee Roy Herron thought it was his destiny to fight for our country, and he wanted to be ready.

When he left for Vietnam in late 1968, he was mentally and physically prepared for battle.

He died a hero, 50 years ago today.

Read David Nelson's tribute to his friend, Lee Roy Herron, online at [Stripes.com/go/herron](https://www.stripes.com/go/herron).

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WORLD

Pope opens summit with a call for action

BY NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis warned church leaders summoned Thursday to a landmark sex abuse prevention summit that the Catholic faithful are demanding more than just condemnation of the crimes of priests but concrete action to respond to the scandal.

Francis opened the four-day summit by telling the Catholic hierarchy that their own responsibility to deal effectively with priests who rape and molest children weighed on the proceedings.

"Listen to the cry of the young, who want justice," and seize the opportunity to "transform this evil into a chance for understanding and purification," Francis told the 190 leaders of bishops conferences and religious orders.

"The holy people of God are watching and expect not just simple and obvious condemnations, but efficient and concrete measures to be established," he warned.

More than 30 years after the scandal first erupted in Ireland and Australia and 20 years after it hit the U.S., bishops and Catholic officials in many parts of Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia still either deny that clergy sex abuse exists in their regions or downplay the problem.

Francis, the first Latin American pope, called the summit after himself botching a well-known sex abuse cover-up case in Chile last year. Realizing he had erred, he has vowed to chart a new course and is

bringing the rest of the church leadership along with him.

The summit is meant as a tutorial for church leaders to learn the importance of preventing sex abuse in their churches, tending to victims and investigating the crimes when they occur.

In the keynote speech, Manila Cardinal Luis Tagle choked up several times as told the bishops that the wounds the scandal has caused among the faithful recalled the wounds of Christ on the cross. He demanded they no longer run in fear or turn a blind eye to the harm caused by clergy sex abuse and their own inaction to halt the problem.

"Faith that would like to close its eyes to peoples' suffering is just an illusion," he said.

Abuse survivors have turned out in droves, coming to Rome to demand accountability and transparency from church leaders, saying the time of cover-ups is over.

Phil Saviano, who helped expose the U.S. abuse scandal by priests two decades ago, demanded that the Vatican release the names of abusers and their files.

"Do it to break the code of silence," he told the organizing committee on the eve of the summit. "Do it out of respect for the victims of these men, and do it to help prevent these creeps from abusing any more children."

The Vatican isn't expecting any miracles or even a final document to come out of the summit, and the pope himself has tried to lower expectations.

Polish activists topple priest statue

Associated Press



GAZETA WYBORCZA/AP

WARSAW, Poland — Activists in Poland pulled down a statue of a priest early Thursday after increasing allegations that he sexually abused minors, a stunt they said was to protest the failure of the Polish Catholic Church to resolve the problem of clergy sex abuse.

Video footage showed three men attaching a rope around the statue of the late Monsignor Henryk Jankowski in the northern city of Gdansk and pulling it to the ground under the cover of darkness. The activists then placed children's underwear in one of the statue's hands and a small white laced church vestment worn by altar boys on the statue's body to symbolize the suffering of children molested by the prelate.

It was a striking act in a country where more than 90 percent of the population identifies as Roman Catholic and where the church still enjoys significant authority in public life. That position appears to be changing as secularization grows hand-in-hand with a flourishing economy.

Activists in Gdansk, Poland, on Tuesday pull down a statue of a prominent deceased priest, Father Henryk Jankowski, who allegedly abused minors sexually.

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WORLD



MAHMUD HOSSAIN Opu/AP

Firefighters try to douse a devastating fire in Dhaka, Bangladesh, that raged through at least five buildings and killed scores of people on Wednesday.

Deadly Bangladesh fire guts historic district

By EMILY SCHMALL
AND JULHAS ALAM
Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh — A fire in Bangladesh on Wednesday night killed at least 81 people and gutted a section of Chawkbazar, a section of Dhaka that dates to the Mughal era 400 years ago, in a stark reminder of the lapses in public safety that continue in the South Asian country despite its rapid economic development.

The fire leaped from building to building in the ancient district, a warren of narrow streets — some only 3 feet wide — with apartments squeezed over shops, restaurants and industrial warehouses on the ground floors.

Witnesses said many gas cylinders stored in the buildings continued to explode one after another. They said the fire also set off explosions in the fuel tanks of some vehicles that were stuck in traffic in front of the destroyed buildings.

Officials said firefighters struggled to reach the area because heavy traffic and narrow alleys that were busy when the fire started.

After a fire in 2010 swept through Nimtoli, a district near Chawkbazar, killing at least 123 people, authorities promised to bring the area into compliance with building codes and regulations and to evict chemical warehouses from buildings where people lived.

Industrial facilities can't legally exist in areas that are zoned residential, said Mohammed Manjur Morshed, an assistant professor of urban planning at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology.

"This type of thing happens; there's a big initiative to move everything out, and then after some time people forget about it and the government is really not interested anymore. It's like that," Morshed said.

In 2014, three people were killed and three others severely burned when a perfume warehouse on the third floor of a building in Chawkbazar caught fire. The following year, a fire gutted eight plastic factories.

Morshed said government regulations are sufficient but are routinely flouted in Chawkbazar. "This is a historic area with a

distinct culture," he said. "They are not really abiding by the government's rules."

The newer northern half of Dhaka, where many famous fashion brand factories are located, contrasts greatly

with the southern half that includes Chawkbazar.

"As the area was developed continuously, there is very high population density and haphazard growth," said Sharif-Ur-Rehman, an urban planning professor at Jahangirnagar University in Dhaka.

"You need to consider preservation to maintain the heritage," he said, "but this is not the first time. We have an unfortunate history, and we need in redeveloping to figure how to provide services, like access for firefighters."

On Thursday afternoon, shops had opened and the streets were crowded in much of Chawkbazar, outside a police cordon where authorities continued to comb through the destruction left by the blaze.

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Ocean Breeze Club
Camp Foster, Okinawa

Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2PM-5PM

Hiring Our Heroes Career Fair
Camp Foster Community Center Auditorium
Camp Foster, Okinawa

Wednesday, Feb. 27, 5PM-7PM

Hiring Our Heroes Networking Reception
Sharkey's Road House, Yokosuka Naval Base

Thursday, Feb. 28, 10AM-12Noon

Yokosuka Naval Base Information Session
Consolidated Fleet Activities, Yokosuka
Bldg. 3008, Fleet Rec Center, Room 336

Thursday, Feb. 28, 2PM-5PM

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WORLD

Better risk info sought for airlines flying over war zones

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — More than four years after a Malaysian passenger jet was shot down over conflict-ravaged eastern Ukraine, airlines around the world still need more and better information to make risk assessments about flying over war zones, a Dutch safety watchdog said Thursday.

The Dutch Safety Board's comments came in a report following up on its 2015 probe into the cause of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 on July 17, 2014, and subsequent recommendations to improve aviation safety and security.

The safety board investigation concluded that the plane was shot down by a Buk missile launched from territory controlled by pro-Russian rebels. All 298 people on board were killed as the plane disintegrated in midair and showered debris over fields in Ukraine.

An international criminal investigation is still underway aimed at bringing the perpetrators to justice. The Netherlands and Australia have said they hold Russia responsible for supplying the missile.

The safety board's chairman, Tjibbe Joutstra, said progress has been made since the downing of MH17 in sharing information about potential risks of flying over conflicts and that airlines are now



PETER DEJONG/AP

The reconstructed wreckage of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 shot down over Ukraine is displayed at a press conference in Gilze-Rijen, central Netherlands, in 2015. A new report urges better risk assessments by airlines conducting flights over conflict zones.

taking action more quickly.

"Airlines are taking a more structured approach to analyzing the risks and uncertainties, scaling up to a higher risk level at an earlier stage," the safety board said.

Nations, international aviation organizations and international organizations such as the European Commission also are working together better to improve intelligence sharing, Joutstra said.

But the report stressed that more needs to be done.

"Very few changes relating to airspace management by nations dealing with armed conflict within their territories have been made," the board said in a statement. "Also, airlines require more detailed and complex information to perform adequate risk assessments."

Joutstra said he saw little action on a recommendation by the board to move quickly on shutting airports or imposing altitude limits in the skies above conflict zones.

Swedish teen joins Belgian students on climate march

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg is joining Belgian students who are skipping classes for the seventh Thursday in a row to march through Brussels to draw more attention to fighting climate change.

Thunberg, 16, first addressed a European Union conference, chiding adults for their inaction in the face of such climatic global dangers. She said youngsters are being forced to skip school and protest because adults are not addressing climate issues quickly enough.

She told the European Economic and Social Committee plenary session that "we are school striking because we have done our homework" on the dangers facing the Earth.

Thunberg has become her generation's voice on climate change after inspiring students around the world to go on strike to express their anger and angst over global warming.

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<https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/521852500>

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<https://www.usajobs.gov/Search?a=DD80>

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Cold case unit solves its oldest crime

NH CONCORD — New Hampshire's Cold Case Unit says it has solved its oldest crime, the shooting death 52 years ago of an auto repair shop worker, and says the man who did it killed himself years later.

In September 1966, Everett Delano, 49, was shot three times in the head while working at Sanborn's Garage in Andover. The case stalled after numerous interviews and an investigation.

The unit reopened the Delano case in 2013 after being contacted by a member of his family. Investigators discovered that fingerprints from the scene hadn't been entered into an FBI database, which wasn't fully operational in 1966.

The prints led to Thomas Cass, 67, of Orleans, Vt., who denied any knowledge of the case in 2014 but shot himself after police executed a search warrant at his home.

No more cheerleading awards for body parts

WI KENOSHA — A Wisconsin school district official said its high school will no longer hand out cheerleading awards that are based on a girl's physical attributes, including largest breasts or buttocks.

The American Civil Liberties Union says an annual banquet has been held at Tremper High School in the Kenosha Unified School District that recognizes the most improved or hardest working cheerleaders. But the ACLU says special gag awards are also given based on certain physical attributes.

District spokeswoman Tanya Ruder said these awards won't be made at future banquets.

Police: Man says he stole truck to get to the airport

OK TULSA — Authorities allege an Oklahoma man stole a Pepsi truck as the driver was unloading soda.

Tulsa police said no one was hurt. The driver jumped out of the back when he felt his rig move. A trail of sodas spilled up as the truck drove off. Police said Steven Hart told them he was trying to get to the airport after an argument with his girlfriend. The girlfriend said he was searching for her.

Police said that when they caught up to the truck stopped in traffic, Hart jumped out and started to run off. Hart was arrested as the rig rolled into the back of a school bus. No children were aboard.

Hart is being held on pending charges that include larceny and attempted escape from the county jail as he was being booked.

House kills bill for single time zone

ND BISMARCK — The North Dakota House has killed a bill that would make Central time the state's official time zone. The measure failed 81-11 on Wednesday.

A dozen of North Dakota's 53 counties, all of them west of the

THE CENSUS

\$10M

The value of unused computer equipment that was bought by the state of Kansas in a failed effort to develop a centralized storage system for computer information and now has been donated to Kansas State University. The university says it will use the equipment for research, education and to assist with technology issues created after a fire last year in its main library. The equipment recently was delivered to Kansas State, which plans to put it into use in coming months.



RYAN HERMENS, RAPID CITY (S.D.) JOURNAL/AP

A helping hand

Jonathan Santos Silva, 5, of Rapid City, S.D., holds out food for Angel, a 3-year-old alpaca, Monday at the downtown branch of the Rapid City Public Library. Angel was one of three alpacas from the Alpaca and Guest Ranch at the first-time event that drew over 100 people.

Missouri River, are either partially or wholly within the Mountain time zone.

The idea of one time zone has been proposed in the Legislature several times over the years but has never gotten needed support.

Pot brick worth \$3K found in donation bin

MO SPRINGFIELD — Big Brothers Big Sisters is hoping some good can come from the cellophane-wrapped marijuana brick that was dropped in a Springfield donation bin.

The Springfield News-Leader reported that responding officers estimated the pot had a street value of \$3,000.

The discovery was made last May as volunteers sorted through donations, but it only recently became public when the charity's Ozark office highlighted it in its monthly bulletin.

Big Brothers Big Sisters' Think Big Foundation President Tyler Moles said donations of adult and children's clothes and shoes are down during the cold winter months, so he's hoping the publicity can serve as a reminder that the charity is collecting those items.

Kindergartener found with handgun on bus

PA PITTSBURGH — School officials in Pittsburgh said a kindergartener was found with a handgun on a school bus.

Pittsburgh Public Schools spokeswoman Ebony Pugh said the gun was found in the Pittsburgh Faison K-5 student's backpack Monday after school was dismissed. Pugh said another student alerted the bus driver to the weapon, and the gun was removed without incident. She said parents were notified.

As of Tuesday, Pugh said, students will be required to pass through school metal detectors. Previously, only adult visitors and parents were required to do so.

Jeweler known for celebrity clients robbed

GA ATLANTA — Police are searching for two gunmen involved in the weekend burglary of an Atlanta jewelry store known for its celebrity clients and the manager's home.

WXIA-TV reported the armed men followed the manager of

Icebox Diamonds and Watches home and forced him and his wife inside.

Cobb County police said the men tied up the manager and his wife, took keys to the jewelry store and forced the manager to provide access codes to the store and its safes. Local media reported officials said one suspect left to rob the store while the other stayed behind and took jewelry and cash from the manager's home.

The store is known for its famous clientele, including rappers Meek Mill and Ludacris, along with actors and athletes.

Driver injured after exiting moving pickup

ID JEROME — A Burley, Idaho, woman was hospitalized after police say she fell or jumped from a moving pickup truck she was driving on Interstate 84.

KTVB-TV reported the Idaho State Police responded to the crash around 12:48 a.m. Monday.

Maribel Villeda was driving east on I-84 with passenger Aguilar-Romero Cruz Lorenzo. Sergio Ramirez Cornejo, of King Hill, was behind Villeda in a Freightliner commercial vehicle pulling

a trailer.

Police don't know why, but Villeda got out of the pickup on the driver's side while it was still moving. Ramirez Cornejo swerved to avoid hitting her and his Freightliner struck the pickup.

Villeda was taken to St. Luke's Magic Valley Medical Center in Twin Falls.

Rare owls thrive in preserve near airport

CA LOS ANGELES — Researchers have discovered a group of rare owls thriving in a nature preserve near Los Angeles International Airport, according to a newspaper report.

The 10 burrowing owls are the most seen at LAX Dunes Preserve in 40 years, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Scientists attribute the return of the migratory owls to ongoing restoration work at the 300-acre preserve that used to be the beachfront community of Surfridge. The neighborhoods disappeared decades ago as the jet age boomed and have been reclaimed by sand, native brush and invasive weeds.

From wire reports

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Samsung unveils its \$1,980 folding phone

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AND ANICK JESDANUN
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Samsung unveiled a highly anticipated smartphone with a foldable screen in an attempt to break the innovation funk that has beset the smartphone market.

But it's far from clear that consumers will embrace a device that retails for almost \$2,000, or that it will provide the creative catalyst the smartphone market needs.

The Galaxy Fold, announced Wednesday in San Francisco, will sell for \$1,980 when it is released April 26.

Consumers willing to pay that hefty price will get a device that can unfold like a wallet. It can work like a traditional smartphone with a 4.6-inch screen or morph into something more like a mini-tablet with a 7.3-inch screen.

When fully unfolded, the device will be able to simultaneously run three different apps on the screen.

The Galaxy Fold will also boast six cameras: three in the back, two on the inside and one on the front.

After spending nearly five



Eric Risenberg/AP

Justin Denison, a Samsung senior vice president, talks about the new Samsung Galaxy Fold smartphone during an event in San Francisco on Wednesday.

years developing the technology underlying its foldable-screen phone, Samsung is clearly hoping for a big payoff.

"Get ready for the dawn of a new era," said DJ Koh, who oversees Samsung's smartphone division. The new phone, he said, "answers skeptics who said everything has already been done."

If Samsung is right, the Galaxy Fold will spur more people to upgrade their phones. Over-

all smartphones sales peaked in 2017; Samsung saw its smartphone sales fall 8 percent last year, based on estimates from the research firm International Data Corp. Worldwide, smartphone sales dropped 4 percent in 2018, according to IDC.

Most analysts see a limited market for foldable-screen phones, at least in the early going.

Phones like the Galaxy Fold "are likely to sell to a very limited

market of technology aficionados who like big screens and have big wallets," said IDC analyst Ramon Llamas.

Although he also believes the Galaxy Fold is more a "status symbol" than a mainstream product, Moor Insights & Strategy analyst Patrick Moorhead said the device is symbolically important for Samsung, the top seller of smartphones in the world.

"The Fold was icing on the cake showing that Samsung is the company driving new innovations and excitement to the market," Moorhead said.

There's no doubt that the Galaxy Fold is "luxury technology," conceded Justin Denison, a Samsung senior vice president during an interview. But he also predicted that the advent of foldable screens will unleash new uses for mobile devices.

"It's a technological marvel," Denison said. "The first time you see a flexible screen, it sort of bends your mind."

Samsung also released new Galaxy S10 phones that echo the features in other recent models. Each device in the S10 lineup boasts fancy cameras, sleek screens covering the entire front of the devices and at least 128 gi-

gabytes of storage — important features to consumers shopping for phones.

The new phones are able to take wider-angle shots than previous models and can charge other devices, including wireless headphones and smartwatches.

A fourth S10 model, due out this spring, will have faster wireless speeds through the emerging 5G cellular network.

All three S10 models will come out March 8, with pre-orders starting Thursday.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Feb. 22)	\$1.655
Dollar buys (Feb. 22)	40.858
British pound (Feb. 22)	\$1.34
Japanese yen (Feb. 22)	109.00
South Korean won (Feb. 22)	1,097.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3055
Canada (Dollar)	1.3182
China (Yuan)	6.7207
Denmark (Krone)	6.5785
Egypt (Pound)	17.5616
Euro	\$1.1343/0.8816
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.8471
Hungary (Forint)	290.11
Israel (Shekel)	3.6200
Japan (Yen)	110.66
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3036
Norway (Krone)	8.6265
Philippines (Peso)	52.18
Poland (Zloty)	3.82
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7504
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3534
South Korea (Won)	1,126.67
Switzerland (Franc)	1.0008
Thailand (Baht)	31.20
Turkey (Lira)	5.3281

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance. For Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

MARKET WATCH

Feb. 20, 2019

Dow Jones industrials	63.12
	25,954.44
Nasdaq composite	2.30
	7,489.07
Standard & Poor's 500	4.94
	2,784.70
Russell 2000	7.19
	1,581.66

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	\$2.989	--	\$3.059	--
Change in price	+3.0 cents	--	+4.0 cents	--
Okhawa	\$2.369	--	\$3.059	--
Change in price	+4.0 cents	--	+4.0 cents	--
South Korea	\$2.339	--	\$3.029	\$3.089
Change in price	+3.0 cents	--	+4.0 cents	+4.0 cents
Guam	\$2.389**	\$2.759	\$3.009	--
Change in price	+4.0 cents	+3.0 cents	+3.0 cents	--

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For the week of Feb. 22 - 28

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$2.583	\$2.954	\$3.206	\$3.272
Change in price	+4.1 cents	+3.1 cents	+2.8 cents	+4.0 cents
Netherlands	--	\$3.357	\$3.508	\$3.769
Change in price	--	+6.8 cents	+6.8 cents	+9.0 cents
U.K.	--	\$2.888	\$3.140	\$3.206
Change in price	--	+3.1 cents	+2.8 cents	+4.0 cents
Azores	--	--	\$3.127	--
Change in price	--	--	+2.8 cents	--
Belgium	--	\$2.614	\$2.832	\$3.137
Change in price	--	No change	No change	No change
Turkey	--	--	\$3.023	\$3.089*
Change in price	--	--	+2.8 cents	+4.0 cents

WEATHER OUTLOOK



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

WEEKEND

91st ACADEMY AWARDS

2 Associated Press critics pick who should win and who will win the big awards on Oscar night

Pages 24-25

Best actress favorite Glenn Close among stars who have been denied a statuette

Page 26

Commentary: Despite falling TV ratings, the Oscars are more important than ever

Page 27



WHY NOT

BLACK PANTHER

FOR BEST PICTURE?

Page 23

'Green Book' spurs interest in guidebook that helped black travelers navigate segregated U.S.

Page 33

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WEEKEND: GADGETS

Fun, fleeting

New game-a-day platform Meditations proves there can be joy in text-free play

By TODD MARTENS
Los Angeles Times

Over the past several weeks, new video games have tackled unexpected subjects in unpredictable ways. One release was designed to capture the sensation of seeing a newborn smile for the first time. Another sought to illustrate how an entire family could drift apart after the death of a beloved grandfather.

The former was over in about 30 seconds. The latter took a couple of minutes. Both have since disappeared.

The games are part of the on-line project Meditations, which officially launched Jan. 1. The free, web-based platform, led by independent developer Rami Ismail, delivers a new game each day of the year — yes, all 365 of them.

The games are bite-size and can be completed in less than five minutes, but there's a catch: Each is available for only 24 hours, at which point it gets archived until it appears again on the same day in 2020.

So far, there has been a wide swath of games; some are puzzles, others are relatively abstract and most are lightly interactive experiences designed to provoke an emotion. There have been games, for instance, about

family, pets, anger, anxiety and pure effervescence joy.

More than 350 developers created games for Meditations; many are professionals, some are students, and they come from all over the globe.

If there's any sort of connective thread among the works, it's that they all feel deeply personal and embody a belief that games are as intimate as they are playful. The games are also text-free; that's one of Ismail's requirements.

"What I want to prove with this is that games are a more global language than any written or spoken language we have," says Ismail, co-founder of Dutch studio Vlambeer ("Ridiculous Fishing").

"English is a lovely lingua franca for our planet, but if you put a soccer ball on the ground and kick it toward someone, they understand they need to kick it back," he continues. "There's no discussion needed beyond a signal of me being playful. So play with me."

Think of each new game in the Meditations series as akin to discovering a song; after all, they're about the same length. Most, when finished, simply close, a digital representation of self-destructing. And while it's likely that many people will hear about a Meditations game after the 24-hour window has passed,

for some of the participating designers, that was the draw.

"I think the fact that you can only play each game on a certain day gives them additional value," says Spanish developer Luis Diaz Peralta, who releases many of his games for free and often wonders if they'll find an audience.

"There is something beautiful about fleeting things," says Southern California developer John Vanderhoef, "like shooting stars or a momentary field full of fireflies."

Ismail was inspired in part to start the project after discovering and playing the short puzzle game "Tempres," a work that asks the player to slow down to solve it.

"After completing it," he says, "I felt calmer. I thought that was fascinating. It was a little five-minute thing I played, and my day had a color to it. It had a tone to it."

He began to want a daily game-based ritual. "I wanted 365

days to have a color from a game — an inspiration, a thought, a moment of empathy, a challenge, a consideration or thoughtfulness."

Each Meditation is preceded with a brief mission statement from the designer.

For Jan. 2, Adriel Wallick wrote of the struggles of an introvert. Wallick's game required players to carefully manage the growth of a circle to conserve and expend its energy, serving as a metaphor for time alone versus time spent socially.

The following day, Lisa Brown went deep on depression. Brown's stark game put players in control of a tiny purple fairy who struggled to get a human-like figure to leave the room. Make it out and you are enveloped by beaming light. But doing so was a challenge and required flopping up and over a pit of a despair; succumbing to its bleakness was far easier.

"I think a lot of games, espe-

cially larger games, are forced to take a more literal approach," says Ismail. "When you make a game that is more akin in length to a song, you get more abstract modes of interaction and abstract modes of communication."

"That means they map better to the human experience," he continues, adding, "It's like, 'Here is a feeling.' It's a single statement and action."

The hoped-for audience, says Ismail, is those who don't consider themselves game players.

"Being playful would once save your life," Ismail says. "If you climbed a tree for fun, and a tiger came, you'd be in that tree a lot faster than someone who didn't. We want to be playful. It gets beaten out of us by society, but we want to play. It's a powerful part of being a human."

"It's not a wonder," he concludes, "that this is the defining moment of our century."

Download the project online at meditations.games.

GADGET WATCH

Eve Room monitors air quality in the home

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Checking, monitoring and knowing your home's air quality is easy and fast with the wireless Eve Room air quality monitor with Apple HomeKit Technology.

Air quality is such a critical factor that the creators of Eve are not exaggerating by referring to their product as your home's health at a glance.

Inside is precision sensor technology for reading indoor air quality, temperature and humidity sensors, which can be checked via the Eve app and Siri. There is a 1.54-inch touch control display on the front that shows the readings as well as a choice of menus depending on your preferences.

I learned from reading about the Eve Room that almost everything produces volatile organic compounds. When left indoors, VOC emissions can quickly rise to unhealthy or even harmful levels. Once the Eve Room alerts you to these harmful levels, the solution can be as easy as opening a door or window.

Humidity levels are often the cause of headaches or even house plants failing to thrive. The app shows when the levels are off, and provides a breakdown by hours, days, months and years to see if there's a pattern to help you find the cause.

The compact, 2.1-by-2.1-by-0.5-inch device is subtle and has an anodized aluminum body. You'll have to recharge its (micro-USB) battery every six weeks. Or it can be set up with the included USB cable to an AC power source for a permanent power supply.

Information the Eve Room collects is transmitted with Bluetooth so there's no hardware bridge needed. With HomeKit, an iPhone or iPad with iOS 11.4 or later is required. For using it with automation and remote access, you'll need an Apple HomePod voice assistant speaker or AppleTV with tvOS 11 or later, which can both serve as a home hub. An Apple Watch can also be used to access Siri for setting scenes.

A quick start guide is included to get you set up in just minutes. It's so easy, and the rewards can be priceless.

Online: evehome.com; \$99.95

When I say that the **Energizer Smart Wi-Fi Surge Protector** is amazing, you have to believe me. I know it's not easy to get excited about a power strip, but this is something every home needs — you might even want boxes of them.

The box indicates that features from automation to powering AC devices and direct USB connections are just the beginning. The surge protector, which is hub free, has voice control, remote access, Wi-Fi, scheduling and scenes.

With the accompanying **Energizer Connect App** (found in the App Store and Google Play), four AC devices can be controlled remotely. The setup is easy; download the app, turn on the protector and use the app to control everything. The Wi-Fi works with your existing home Wi-Fi, and connections and setup are made through the app.

With four AC plugs and a pair of USB ports (2 amp total), you can plug devices in and use them without controls, or control only some of them. Either way, the uses are endless: For instance, set up lights for nighttime, TV time or a vacation mode scene. Once a scene is created, you can use it manually or execute it through the app with schedules.

The product is compatible with Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant.



Eve/TNS

Information collected by the Eve Room is transmitted via Bluetooth.

The surge protection, its built with 1,200 Joule rating to provide protection from most power surges and spikes. A 6-foot braided decord plug with a low-profile angled plug fits AC wall outlets. There's also a built-in manual power button and operation LED indicators.

Each port is accessed from the front along with a main power on/off switch. Online: energizerconnect.com; \$49.99, available later this year

WEEKEND: ACADEMY AWARDS PREVIEW

COMMENTARY

Why 'Black Panther' deserves best picture

BY KENNETH TURAN
Los Angeles Times

In 1958, Alfred Hitchcock did something audacious.

Working in the Hollywood studio system, he made a movie as intensely personal as anything contemporary audiences would expect from the Sundance Film Festival. He used two of the biggest stars of the day and put them into a story where what mattered to him was front and center.

The film was "Vertigo," starring James Stewart and Kim Novak. It was not well received, and a long time passed before it was taken seriously.

But in 2012, when the respected British film journal Sight & Sound released its once-a-decade poll of critics worldwide selecting the best movies ever made, "Vertigo" was No. 1. You can look it up.

I thought of "Vertigo" when I started thinking about "Black Panther" — about what the superhero blockbuster accomplished, why it has been underappreciated and why it would be my choice for the best picture Oscar this year.

Of course, parallels between "Black Panther" and "Vertigo" are far from exact.

For one, "underappreciated" is not a term most people would choose for a film that has accumulated a worldwide gross of \$1.35 billion, seven Oscar nominations and the coveted SAG ensemble cast award, all while spending an almost unheard-of six months in theaters.

But despite "Black Panther's" undeniable success, there is no shortage of those who devalue its accomplishments, who either dismiss it as just another superhero movie or refuse to watch it at all for the same reason. The motion picture academy, which denied the film writing, directing and acting nominations, likely has voters who fit that description.

Those doubters might not grasp the extent of what director-cowriter Ryan Coogler and his team have accomplished. Very much like Hitchcock, they've gone into the belly of the beast, expropriated the deep-pockets resources of the Marvel-Disney juggernaut and used them for their own purposes. This is not easy to do. Those Hollywood machines exist not to serve individuals but to bend them to their will. Indie and foreign language directors without number have been lured to studios by the promise of being able to make films their own way, only to find the reality very different.

And yet here is "Black Panther," a film so intensely personal that when the classic

Marvel elements appear — like a cameo by the late Stan Lee — they almost feel out of place.

"Black Panther," however, deserves a best picture Oscar not because it managed to go its own way but because of what going its own way meant.

Before examining that, it's important to underline that "Black Panther" fulfilled its part of the bargain with Marvel by delivering a superhero saga that pleased the entertainment behemoth's massive core audience. This is by no means a given, and although it's not a reason to give a film an Oscar, neither should it be — as has often been the case — a reason for disqualification.

Nowhere is it written, though voters sometimes act as if it is, that the Oscars are an elitist award for which mass-appeal movies need not apply. In a sane world, intelligently satisfying an enormous audience should be one of the things the Oscars are all about.

The key word there is "intelligently," and if you've watched more than your share of superhero movies, you know that quality is often in short supply in a genre dominated by business-as-usual boilerplate.

Coogler (who co-wrote with Joe Robert Cole) ensured that "Black Panther" would be an exception, in part by retaining his core creative team of collaborators, including composer Ludwig Göransson and production designer Hannah Beachler (both nominated) as well as editor Michael P. Shawver and cinematographer Rachel Morrison.

Adding costume designer Ruth E. Carter (also nominated, for the third time in a distinguished career) was icing on the cake.

The result is a singular superhero movie where the characters have integrity, intelligence and dramatic heft, and the crises and action are grounded in a convincing reality.

To call "Black Panther" a comic book movie is to mischaracterize a film that has more in common with grand adventure epics of the past, including "Lord of the Rings" and "The Man Who Would Be King" than with "The Incredible Hulk."

And there is something else — something that is both the most obvious and the most significant factor.

The filmmakers behind "Black Panther" were intent on creating a vibrant Afrocentric world and to bringing a culture Hollywood has habitually ignored or denigrated to glorious notice.

Not only are characters such as Michael B. Jordan's Erik Killmonger nuanced and complex, with perspectives never before articulated in a Hollywood blockbuster, but also the film's dazzling design references everything from Ghanaian textiles to a 19th-century Nigerian script to the dress of tribes including the Maasai, Tuareg, Dogon and Zulu.

"Never before in Hollywood have we had the chance to show the continent intellectually — it had all been 'Africa, dirt floors,'" Carter said at the time of the film's release. "We were trying to understand ancient African culture in a way that didn't look 'savage' but looked glorious, kingly, warrior-like."

That approach embodies the truth that as filmmakers, we want all cultures and colors represented on-screen, because it makes for a richness of cinematic experience that everyone enjoys being exposed to.

"Black Panther" not only enriched America's movie culture but it also opened eyes all over the world. It was hands down the cinematic event of the year for the way its artistic and box office success led to opportunities for filmmakers to make their voices heard and audiences to experience settings and stories that previously would not have been seen.

If all of that, plus high-octane entertainment, isn't worthy of a best picture Oscar, I don't know what is.

WEEKEND: ACADEMY AWARDS PREVIEW

BEST
ACTRESS

Yalitza Aparicio ("Roma")
Glenn Close ("The Wife")
Olivia Colman ("The Favourite")
Lady Gaga ("A Star Is Born")
Melissa McCarthy ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?")

Bahr:

Will Win: Glenn Close
Should Win: Olivia Colman

The conventional wisdom is that Glenn Close is overdue for an Oscar. Thankfully, she's really wonderful in "The Wife," as the dutifully supportive spouse of a newly-minted Nobel-winning writer. A "career Oscar" isn't a bad sentiment and definitely not a "pity Oscar." But love definitely has no limits when it comes to my own appreciation of Olivia Colman's performance as Queen Anne in "The Favourite," which could get passed over because Colman hasn't been a fixture on the schmooze circuit (she was busy shooting "The Crown," which is a totally reasonable excuse).

Coyle:

Will Win: Glenn Close
Should Win: Glenn Close

**Close**

There's not a bad choice in the bunch and many more, too, that didn't make the cut. There might be room here for an upset from Colman, whose Queen Anne was a delirious heap of emotions. Surely there will be some voters who'd like to see Colman thank "my bitches" again at the Oscars. But it feels like this belongs to Close, whose subtle performance in "The Wife" overflows with the kind of intricacy that can go (and, in Close's case, often has gone) overlooked at the Academy Awards.

BEST
PICTURE

**"Black Panther"; "BlackKkKlansman";
 "Bohemian Rhapsody"; "The Favourite";
 "Green Book"; "Roma";
 "A Star Is Born"; "Vice"**

Bahr:

Will Win: "Roma"; **Should Win:** "A Star Is Born"

"Not to go all Sean Penn here, but 'A Star Is Born' really should win best picture, even though it probably won't. 'Roma' is wonderful, but I fear it's one of those films that won't be re-watched or even talked about much 5 or 10 years from now, whereas 'A Star Is Born' is not only great, but feels like a classic already. And that's something special.

Coyle:

Will Win: "Roma"; **Should Win:** "Black Panther"

The guild wins, which usually point the way, have been all over the map making this a hard one to call. The momentum is with "Roma" thanks, in part, to an all-out blitz of a campaign from Netflix (which has eyes for an Oscar the way Jackson Maine wants another look at Ally) and because of, well, it's a fairly astonishing movie. But "Black Panther" and the response it provoked epitomized the cultural height of movies, something some doubted was still possible.

BEST
ACTOR

Christian Bale ("Vice")
Bradley Cooper ("A Star Is Born")
Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate")
Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody")
Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book")

Bahr:

Will Win: Rami Malek
Should Win: Bradley Cooper

That Rami Malek somehow became the consensus choice here still kind of baffles me, especially when there's Bradley Cooper giving the performance of a lifetime as sad, sweet, awful and tragic Jackson Maine. He felt realer than the sanitized Freddie Mercury of "Bohemian Rhapsody," that's for sure.

Coyle:

Will Win: Rami Malek
Should Win: Willem Dafoe

In an Oscars full of question marks, Malek's win seems the most assured. His performance is the kind of show-stopper that Oscar voters love. (Malek chews so much scenery they gave him extra teeth.) But another biopic, Julian Schnabel's "At Eternity's Gate," featured a far more searching and deeply felt performance in Dafoe's Vincent Van Gogh. For the second year straight, Dafoe (a nominee in 2018 for "The Florida Project") won't win an Oscar he deserves.

**Malek**

Continued on page 25

Who will
win? Who
should win?

Ahead of Sunday's
91st Academy Awards,
Associated Press film
writers Lindsey Bahr and
Jake Coyle share their
predictions for a ceremony
that has few sure things.

WEEKEND: ACADEMY AWARDS PREVIEW

BEST
SUPPORTING
ACTRESS

Amy Adams ("Vice")
Marina de Távira ("Roma")
Regina King ("If Beale Street Could Talk")
Emma Stone ("The Favourite")
Rachel Weisz ("The Favourite")

Bahr:

Will Win: Regina King
 Should Win: Regina King

**King****Coyle:**

Will Win: Rachel Weisz
 Should Win: Regina King

Regina King is the favorite and deservedly so, but there's a sneaky chance for an upset here. King wasn't nominated by the Screen Actors Guild, whose picks often correlate to the Oscars. That could leave open a window for Rachel Weisz, who won at the British Academy Film Awards. The love for "The Favourite" and its terrific cast could bubble up in a few categories.

FOREIGN
LANGUAGE
FILM

"Capernaum" (Lebanon)
"Cold War" (Poland)
"Never Look Away" (Germany)
"Roma" (Mexico)
"Shoplifters" (Japan)

Bahr:

Will Win: "Cold War"
 Should Win: "Cold War"

Although it would make a certain amount of sense for "Roma" to win both best picture and best foreign language film, I think some voters are going to assume "Roma" will win the big one and possibly divide the riches and favor the runner-up, the immensely deserving "Cold War."

Coyle:

Will Win: "Roma"
 Should Win: "Shoplifters"

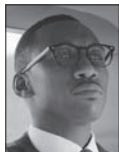
"Roma" deserves the many accolades it has received. But its lockstep awards-season sweep has obscured a tremendously good bunch of foreign language nominees. Hirokazu Kore-eda's "Shoplifters," which won Cannes' Palme d'Or, is made with such delicacy that you never see its profundity coming.

BEST
SUPPORTING
ACTOR

Mahershala Ali ("Green Book")
Adam Driver ("BlackKkKlansman")
Sam Elliott ("A Star Is Born")
Richard E. Grant ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?")
Sam Rockwell ("Vice")

Bahr:

Will Win: Mahershala Ali
 Should Win: Sam Elliott

**Ali**

Mahershala Ali is the only safe way for "Green Book"-loving academy members to give the film an award. Ali brings dignified complexity to the fascinating character of Dr. Don Shirley, but, much like "The Favourite," it's really a co-lead anyway. And is there a single image

that can conjure up as many emotions as seeing a teary-eyed Sam Elliott backing out of the driveway where he's just dropped his troubled half-brother off at home for what could be the last time? It's a perfect supporting performance.

Coyle:

Will Win: Mahershala Ali
 Should Win: Richard E. Grant

A win for Ali, two years after he took home the same Oscar for "Moonlight" (a, uh, different movie than "Green Book"), would be something to applaud. But so would an Oscar for Richard E. Grant, a brilliant character actor who has enjoyed the Oscar spotlight more than anyone.

ANIMATED
FEATURE

"Incredibles 2"; "Isle of Dogs"; "Mirai"; "Ralph Breaks the Internet"; "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"

Bahr:

Will Win: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"
 Should Win: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"

"Spider-Verse" will and should win because, frankly, it's unlike anything we've ever seen in this animation category before.

Coyle:

Will Win: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"
 Should Win: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse"

The game-changing "Spider-Verse" has it in the bag, though I'm tempted to make a case for Brad Bird's "Incredibles 2." A win would so please Jack-Jack.

BEST
DIRECTOR

Spike Lee ("BlackKkKlansman")
Pavel Pawlikowski ("Cold War")
Yorgos Lanthimos ("The Favourite")
Alfonso Cuarón ("Roma")
Adam McKay ("Vice")

Bahr:

Will Win: Alfonso Cuarón
 Should Win: Spike Lee

**Cuarón**

Cuarón did an astonishing job writing, directing and shooting "Roma," which feels like an epic although it's in fact a very small and contained story. But it is Lee's "BlackKkKlansman" that is the big cinematic achievement to be celebrated in the directing category.

Coyle:

Will Win: Alfonso Cuarón
 Should Win: Spike Lee

Alfonso Cuarón's achievement in "Roma" is staggering in the precision of its obsessiveness, but "BlackKkKlansman" is equally as chock-full of Spike Lee's own passions and perfectly synthesizes the themes that have long propelled the filmmaker.

ADAPTED
SCREENPLAY

"The Ballad of Buster Scruggs" (Joel Coen, Ethan Coen)
"BlackKkKlansman" (Charlie Wachtel, David Rabinowitz, Kevin Willmott, Spike Lee)
"Can You Ever Forgive Me?" (Nicole Holofcener, Jeff Whitty)
"If Beale Street Could Talk" (Barry Jenkins)
"A Star Is Born" (Eric Roth, Bradley Cooper, Will Fetters)

Bahr:

Will Win: "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"
 Should Win: "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"

I was worried that this one would be shut out completely, but the late-game WGA win gave me hope that Nicole Holofcener and Jeff Whitty's crackling screenplay hasn't been forgotten.

Coyle:

Will Win: "BlackKkKlansman"
 Should Win: "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs"

A win here would assure Lee of his first (and long-overdue) non-honorary Oscar. Joel and Ethan Coen have won twice before for their scripts but that doesn't mean they aren't still the best in the business, as they showed once again with their six-part anthology.

DOCUMENTARY

"Free Solo" (Jimmy Chin, Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi)
"Hale County This Morning, This Evening" (RaMell Ross)
"Minding the Gap" (Bing Liu)
"Of Fathers and Sons" (Tali Derki)
"RBG" (Betsy West, Julie Cohen)

Bahr:

Will Win: "RBG"
 Should Win: "Minding the Gap"

"RBG" is great, but the one that stuck with me in this very strong batch of documentaries is Bing Liu's "Minding the Gap," a lyrical portrait of three young men, bonded by the freedom of the skateboard, growing up in an America that doesn't hold much promise for them.

Coyle:

Will Win: "Free Solo"
 Should Win: "Hale County This Morning, This Evening"

This is probably a toss-up between "Free Solo" and "RBG," the latter of which had the fortune of seeing its iconic subject make a dramatic return to the Supreme Court bench just as Oscar voting was winding down. But don't forget about "Hale County," RaMell Ross' cinematic poem of rural African-American life in Alabama. Its luminous images keep glowing long after the movie has finished.

ORIGINAL
SCREENPLAY

"The Favourite" (Deborah Davis, Tony McNamara)
"First Reformed" (Paul Schrader)
"Green Book" (Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly)
"Roma" (Alfonso Cuarón)
"Vice" (Adam McKay)

Bahr:

Will Win: "The Favourite"
 Should Win: "The Favourite"

While I think Paul Schrader has a shot, Deborah Davis and Tony McNamara are the perfect consensus pick for "The Favourite."

Coyle:

Will Win: "Green Book"
 Should Win: "First Reformed"

This will be a telling award that could signify how strong the support is throughout the academy for "Green Book." But if we're handing out career Oscars, how has Paul Schrader not gotten swept up in that? I mean, the 72-year-old filmmaker (a first-time nominee) only wrote "Taxi Driver," "Raging Bull" and "American Gigolo." The stellar "First Reformed" is a grand summation for Schrader, full of "Taxi Driver" echoes.

WEEKEND: ACADEMY AWARDS PREVIEW

Glenn Close is nominated for an Oscar for best actress for her role in "The Wife."

CHRIS PIZZELLO, INVISION/AP



Close calls

Best actress favorite one of many surprising stars without a statue

By RAFER GUZMAN
Newsday

Anything could happen at this weekend's Academy Awards ceremony, but one safe bet is on Glenn Close, who looks likely to win best actress for her performance in "The Wife." The film earned ecstatic reviews, thanks largely to Close, who plays a writer with unrecognized talent. "The Wife" already has earned Close a Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild award, making the 71-year-old actress the odds-on favorite for an Oscar.

Believe it or not, it would be her first.

That's right — Glenn Close has never won an Oscar. Because she has such a long track record of critical acclaim and commercial success, you can be forgiven for assuming she's picked up the statue at some point. She has been nominated six previous times, in "The World According to Garp," "The Big Chill," "The Natural," "Fatal Attraction," "Dangerous Liaisons" and "Albert Nobbs." Each time, however, Close struck out. Call it the Phantom Oscar: You just think she has one.

Close isn't the only Hollywood star whose lack of Academy gold might surprise you. Here are 11 more examples:



ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

The actor currently known as Iron Man started out as a 1980s pretty boy ("Less Than Zero"), then earned an Oscar nod for his starring role in the biopic "Chaplin." He earned another nomination — one the Academy might prefer to forget — for playing Kirk Lazarus, a blackface performer, in the comedy "Tropic Thunder."



ERROL FLYNN

He was the Tom Cruise of the 1930s, a global superstar whose natural charisma and box-office power put him at the tippy-top of Hollywood — and he never won an Oscar. Unlike Cruise, Flynn was never even nominated, not for "Captain Blood," "The Charge of the Light Brigade" or 1938's still-dazzling "The Adventures of Robin Hood."



HARRISON FORD

Come on, didn't he win for "Witness"? Nope — he lost to William Hurt in "Kiss of the Spider Woman." Other films that didn't even earn Ford a nod: "The Mosquito Coast," "Regarding Henry" and "The Fugitive."



LIAM NEESON

No, he did not win the Academy Award for "Schindler's List." Neeson's performance as a real-life German who helped save Jews during the Holocaust has become so synonymous with emotional depth that "Schindler" spent an entire episode poking fun at it, but he lost the Oscar to Tom Hanks, who won for "Philadelphia."



EDWARD NORTON

Long considered one of the best actors alive, Norton has been nominated three times, for his astounding debut in "Primal Fear," his terrifying performance as a neo-Nazi in "American History X" and his bittersweet portrayal of a Broadway actor in "Birdman Or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)."



JOAQUIN PHOENIX

He's a bit of an anti-celebrity, averse to publicity (check out his rare and strange 2014 interview with NPR's Terry Gross) and no fan of the Academy Awards. It probably doesn't bother him much, then, that his Oscar nominations — for "Gladiator," "Walk the Line" and "The Master" — did not become wins.



AMY ADAMS

After playing charms and nails in such movies as "Catch Me If You Can" and "Enchanted," Adams worked to establish herself as a serious actress. She has starred opposite Christian Bale in three films — "The Fighter," "American Hustle" and "Vice" — each time earning a nomination. Will this year be the charm?



ANNETTE BENING

Looking back on Bening's 30-year film career, you'll find probably a dozen Oscar-worthy performances. Four have earned nominations: A con artist in "The Grifters," a neurotic wife in "American Beauty," a London stage actress in "Being Julia" and a lesbian matriarch in "The Kids Are All Right."



JOHNNY DEPP

He's a worldwide megastar, but despite fine work in "Ed Wood," "Donnie Brasco" and "Finding Neverland," Depp still has no Oscar. A recent spate of negative publicity and overly cartoonish roles ("The Lone Ranger," "Alice in Wonderland") are probably not helping.



LANA TURNER

One of the great screen sirens of the 1940s, Turner steamed up the box office in "The Postman Always Rings Twice," "The Bad and the Beautiful" and many others. She earned critical acclaim, too, and a great deal of money thanks to her 50 percent stake in 1959's smash hit "Imitation of Life." The Oscar, however, never came her way.



SIGOURNEY WEAVER

Any list of great contemporary actresses would surely put Weaver close to the top, but she's missed the Oscar three times, earning nods for the sci-fi film "Aliens," the Dian Fossey biopic "Gorillas in the Mist" and the rom-com "Working Girl." Too bad there isn't an Oscar for Best Popular Performance — she'd probably have one for playing the demonic Dana Barrett in "Ghostbusters."

WEEKEND: MOVIES

Despite low ratings, Oscars remain relevant

By MARY McNAMARA
Los Angeles Times

Quite a few people were unhappy with a column I wrote in which I suggested that the film academy's recent decision to present Oscars in four categories during the commercial break was not a cataclysmic crime against cinema.

Those who were not busy signing their names to letters calling for the academy to reverse its decision, which it eventually did, wrote me, many protesting that in their zeal to improve telecast ratings the Oscars producers had lost sight of its purpose. (Which, according to several readers, is to educate audiences about how films are made. Who knew?)

This is patently absurd. If handing out Oscars during commercial breaks would improve ratings, that change would have been made years ago. (Though it certainly would be nice if this year's producers could, as they have promised, keep the show to three hours or, failing that, book Beyoncé for the halftime entertainment.)

It will be interesting to see how many folks tune in this year. If conventional wisdom holds, multiple nominations for "Black Panther," "A Star Is Born" and, God help us, "Bohemian Rhapsody" should kick the numbers out of last year's all-time low of 26.5 million.

And there's a chance that some will watch just to see how in the hell this is going to work without a host. (Billy Crystal recently told James Corden that he thought a host-less Oscars could be great, and I think we should keep an eye on both their GPS trackers to see if they're making their way anywhere near the Dolby Theatre this week, because wouldn't that be amazing?)

A gain of 10 million would put this year's show within spitting distance of the average since 2008 (which, at 32 million, was the previous low), in 2014, Oscar ratings hit almost 44, but then Ellen DeGeneres was hosting. (And where exactly is this week?)

But, with apologies to ABC's ad sales department, it doesn't matter all that much. Ratings for everything have been falling for years. Yes, the most-watched Oscars telecast, 1998, had 55 million viewers (runner-up, 1983 with 50 million), but in 1998, 76 million watched the (monumentally disappointing) "Seinfeld" finale, and top-rated series (including, yes, it's true, "Veronica's Closet") regularly pulled in close to 25 million viewers. In the new TV landscape, no top show breaks 20 million; "Mad Men" changed the world and never hit four.

Yet television remains an artistic success story, and the Oscars have never been more socially relevant.

Out of the glamour and the glitz and internal politicking, the Oscars have become an unexpected national touchstone for increasingly energized conversations about racism, sexism, immigration, populism and our place in the international community.

COMMENTARY

And not in the traditional "celebrity gives controversial acceptance speech and then is denounced by the academy" way. (Remember when Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins got in trouble for asking the U.S. government to release HIV-positive Haitians from Guantanamo? Or when Paddy Chayefsky mansplained the Oscars to Vanessa Redgrave, who dared use the term "Zionist thesis"?)

Two years of #Oscarsowhite and the continued and dispiriting absence of women in categories, including best director and cinematographer, led to changes in both the makeup of the nominations list and the film academy. Having pledged to double the number of women and minorities by 2020, the group has grown its roster by 25 percent in the past three years (though it remains overwhelmingly white and mostly male).

Two years ago the academy booted former Oscar czar Harvey Weinstein after charges of sexual harassment were made against him by multiple women and last year expelled Bill Cosby and Roman Polanski for similar

reasons. Last year's telecast included many references to #MeToo and a video salute introduced by three of Weinstein's accusers.

In 2017, the Iranian director and the lead actress of the winner for best foreign film boycotted the ceremony in protest of the "travel ban."

This year, Mexican actor Antonio Guerrero Martínez, who stars in best picture nominee "Roma," had to fight to get a visa to attend the awards, which will occur within two weeks of President Trump declaring a state of "national emergency" at our southern border.

All of this has changed the way we talk about the Oscars.

Yes, it's still exciting to anticipate all the fabulous dresses and the prospect of yet another rendition of the song "Shallow." But this year, a black-and-white peacock to the life of a Mexican housekeeper is going up against the first black superhero movie (and the first superhero movie to be nominated for best picture), as well as films about a black man who infiltrated the Klan, a love triangle between an English queen and her female courtiers, and the tragically short life of the bisexual lead singer of Queen.

No matter who wins, and doesn't, there will be a lot to discuss, and those discussions won't revolve around who "bought" an Oscar with influence, threats or outrageous campaigns. They will be about which stories mattered most to voters and why.

The stories we choose to tell and then honor reveal more about who we are than perhaps we have been comfortable admitting in the past. Now those stories are finally expanding in type and teller and meaning. Not just in film but in every medium (including Medium) available to us.

Ironically, the ensuing competition for eyeballs might be one reason the Oscars have gained larger importance.

Media have become cacophonous, splintered, personalized, overwhelming. The Oscar ratings have fallen in part because everyone now has 178 other things to do or watch or tweet about that Sunday night.

But the Oscars themselves remain a fixed point, easily identified, and even with up to 10 nominees for best picture, ruthless in its winnowing process. (It takes the television academy two nights, with no time for musical numbers, to hand out the Emmys, and the Grammys have a category for everything except best use of a Rolling Stones song in a car commercial.)

The Oscar nominees, and winners, make a statement, about film, yes, but also who we are now and who we want to become, and that statement is now what we talk about, ratings be damned.

'Hidden World' a sweet swan song for 'How to Train Your Dragon'

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Born in the 3-D land rush, "How to Train Your Dragon" has never quite shrugged off the bland corporate sheen attached to it from the start. But almost a decade since taking flight in 2010, these movies have made up for their lack of fire with enough sincerity and genuine sense of wonder to sustain a mild but moving trilogy.

"How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World" brings the franchise to a close with an affectionate chapter that continues the adventures of the Viking boy-turned-chief Hiccup (Jay Baruchel) and his faithful dragon Toothless, a sleek, black kind of dragon called a Night Fury.

In "The Hidden World," the dragon utopia that Hiccup has built on the Island of Berk, where Vikings once feared and fought dragons, comes under threat from a dastardly dragon hunter named Grimmel the Grisly (F. Murray Abraham) whose toothy grin resembles a moonlighting vampire with violently retrograde policies on dragon coexistence.

With Berk under attack, Hiccup rallies the Vikings to uproot and flee to a mythical, undiscovered realm called the Hidden World where dragons could live



DREAMWORKS ANIMATION-UNIVERSAL PICTURES/AP

A new threat arises to menace the Vikings and their dragon companions in the sequel "How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World."

safely away from humankind. It feels like an overreaction. Fear some as Grimmel is he's a single and kind of goofy villain, and, plus, real estate values in hidden worlds are notoriously unpredictable.

Written and directed by series veteran Dean DeBlois, "The Hidden World" may not overwhelm in its necessity; it's a tale that lacks the stakes of the previous installment, which dealt significantly with Hiccup's parents — the discovery of one (Cate Blanchett) and the death of another

(Gerard Butler). But the \$1 billion in box office taken in by the first two movies, combined, was enough to push the franchise forward and put "How to Train Your Dragon" back into action five years later (and following the sale of DreamWorks to Universal).

There are two compelling parts of "The Hidden World" that validate it. The first is the courting scene between Toothless and another white (and presumably female) Night Fury who turns up just as

Grimmel does. They swoop and swoon through the sky, gliding in the glow of the Northern Lights like a dragon version of "La La Land."

The second is the film's terrific coda, which leaps years forward and adds a wider, wistful and more grown-up dimension to what has always been, at its heart, a boy-and-his-dog story, just with wings.

"How to Train Your Dragon" has done a lot of things right along the way. It brought in cinematographer extraordinaire Roger Deakins to add to the rich Nordic atmospherics. (Deakins remains credited as a visual consultant in "The Hidden World.") And the series deserves credit, too, for building a story — adapted from Cressida Cowell's books — around two unimpeded protagonists (Hiccup and Toothless) with prosthetic appendages.

Without much to draw on from the surrounding characters (voices include America Ferrera, Jonah Hill and T.J. Miller), "How to Train Your Dragon" has always been predicated on that central twosome and the laudable lesson that animals, even fire-breathing ones, aren't our enemies unless we make them so.

"How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World" is rated PG for adventure action and some mild rude humor. Running time: 104 minutes.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

What's new this year in Spain and Portugal

Like many travelers, last spring I visited Barcelona dreaming of seeing Antoni Gaudi's breathtaking Sagrada Familia church. When I got there, the ticket office was closed, with a posted sign: "No more tickets today. Buy your ticket for another day online." Thankfully, I'd known to book tickets in advance.

Along with Sagrada Familia, Spain's sights to book ahead include Barcelona's Picasso Museum, La Pedrera, Casa Batlló and Park Güell; the Palacios Nazaries at the Alhambra in Granada; and the Royal Alcazar Moorish palace, Church of the Savior and cathedral in Sevilla. Barcelona's Casa Amatller and Palace of Catalan Music, and Salvador Dalí's house in Cadaqués all require a guided tour, which also must be booked ahead. Advance tickets for the Dalí Theater-Museum in nearby Figueres are also a good idea. While it might be technically possible to buy tickets on-site, in my guidebooks I simply say you must reserve in advance. It's much smarter.

Barcelona continues to evolve. After a long renovation, the Maritime Museum has reopened, displaying 13th- to 18th-century ships (restoration continues on the later-century ships). The El Raval neighborhood is rising up as the new bohemian area. While this area has rough edges, its recently reopened Sant Antoni market hall, new Museum of Contemporary Art and pedestrian-friendly streets contribute to its boom of creative shops, bars and restaurants.

In Spain's northern Basque country, San Sebastian's old tobacco factory has been converted into the Tabakaleria International Center for Contemporary Culture, hosting films and art exhibits — and knockout views from its roof terrace. In Pamplona, a new exhibit gives a behind-the-scenes look at the town's famous bullfighting.

In the south of Spain, the cathedral in

Sevilla now runs rooftop tours, providing a better view — and experience — than its bell tower climb. In nearby Cordoba, you can now climb the bell tower at the Mezquita, the massive mosque-turned-cathedral. But Cordoba's 14th-century synagogue is closed for renovation.

Spain's transportation is also improving: Uber is now available in both Barcelona



Rick Steves

now runs between Segovia and Salamanca in about 75 minutes, making it faster than driving.

Portugal has fewer blockbuster sights than Spain and nowhere near the crowds. The only sight where you might have a crowd problem is the Monastery of Jeronimos at Belem, just outside Lisbon proper (buy a combo-ticket at Belem's Archaeology Museum to avoid the ticket line at the monastery).

Riding in most of Lisbon's classic trolley cars — a quintessential Portuguese experience — can also be frustratingly crowded (and plagued by pickpockets targeting tourists). A less-crowded option is trolley line #24E — which is back in service after a decades-long hiatus. Although this route doesn't pass many top sights, you can see a slice of workday Lisbon. (Or, better yet, get your trolley experience in Porto, which has almost no crowds.)

On my last visit I realized that Lisbon's beloved Alfama quarter — its Visigothic birthplace and once-salty sailors' quarter — is salty no more (except with the sweet



DOMINIC ARIZONA BONICELLI/RickStevens.com

Lisbon's trolleys can get unbearably crowded, so have a plan if you want to ride one.

of cruise grocers hiking its now-lifeless lanes). The new colorful zone to explore is the nearby Mouraria, the historic tangled quarter on the back side of the castle. This is where the Moors lived after the Reconquista (when Christian forces retook the city from the Muslims). To this day, it's a gritty and colorful district of immigrants — but don't delay your visit, as it's starting to gentrify just like the Alfama has.

In other Lisbon news, the Museum of Ancient Art finished its top-floor renovation, and plans to renovate its second floor in 2020. One of the city's leading restaurants, Pap'Acorda, has moved to the first floor in the Ribeira market hall (aka the Time Out Market). It's still serving traditional Portuguese cuisine.

In the pilgrimage town of Fatima, where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared in 1917, the new Fatima Light

and Peace Exhibition run by the Roman Catholic Church complements a visit to the basilica, and offers a more pleasing experience than its more commercial competitors.

In Coimbra, ticket options for the University of Coimbra sights, including the beautiful Baroque King Joao library, now cover the nearby and impressive Science Museum — go there first to buy your university tickets and book your required timed entry for the library.

In Porto, the Bolhao Market is closed for a much-needed renovation until mid-2020. In the meantime, vendors are in the basement of a nearby department store ... carrying on the warm shopper relationships that go back generations.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Travel afar at Munich's tourism and travel fair

While not every weekend can be devoted to traveling, a second-best activity is quite possibly planning that next big getaway. And when it comes to seeking destination inspiration, travel fairs are a great way to get a feel for which distant lands are calling your name the loudest.

Germany's best-attended travel fairs include those held in Berlin, Hamburg and Essen. Bavaria's biggest entry is Fre.e, a tourism and travel fair running through Feb. 24 at the trade fair grounds in Munich.

This year's edition is touted as the largest and most comprehensive to date. Some 1,300 exhibitors from more than 70 countries present destinations and lifestyles under one of seven categories: travel; cruising and boat trips; health and wellness, camping and mobile homes, and active life, water sports and cycling. Each edition of the fair features a partner land, and this year it's the nearby Czech Republic extolling its many charms.

There's more to do than merely picking up brochures, snapping up a tape and asking a question or two. A great deal



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe travel blog: [strips.com/blogs/europe-traveler](https://www.strips.com/blogs/europe-traveler)

of floor space here is devoted to leisure activities. The outdoor life pavilion offers a climbing wall, a demo of the lifesaving techniques carried out during an avalanche, and a chance to watch the South German Bouldering Championships or a clips from the European Outdoor Film Festival.

Interactive experiences are also offered in plenty. Power a boat across a virtual Lake Garda, take a crash course in scuba diving or stand-up paddling (don't forget your bathing suit), take a bite on a tour across a specially built track, or dine on a marriage-inspired menu in the cruises

ing pavilion. Kids might enjoy the chance to witness a world record attempt taking place in the camping pavilion, where a true-to-size Volkswagen Bus will be constructed out of Lego blocks alongside an original model.

The fair takes place at the Neue Messe Muenchen at the Messagelaende, connected to the city by the U2 Line. Single-day adult tickets go for 12 euros or 9 euros when purchased online, tickets for children ages 6-14 go for 5 euros, and those 5 and under enter free. As an added bonus, ticket holders can visit two concurrently-running smaller fairs highlighting golfing and automobiles free of charge. Online: [free-muenchen.de](https://www.free-muenchen.de).

All tied up this weekend? Make plans now to attend the ITB Berlin, one of the biggest and best travel and trade shows in the world, taking place March 6-10. Online: [itb-berlin.com](https://www.itb-berlin.com)

Northern Italy trade fair should reel in anglers

Anglers in northern Italy can prepare themselves for another season of landing those big ones by first attending the Pescara Show, a trade fair dedicated to all things related to fishing. Some



Courtesy of the Pescara Show

Visitors to Vicenza's Pescara Show can see all manner of fishing-related displays, including a casting pool.

200 exhibitors are on hand to show off the latest innovations in tackle, bait, gear and lifestyle. The fair runs Feb. 23-25 in Vicenza.

A fun zone to check out is that of the Acquedemo area, billed as a gigantic mobile aquarium of sorts in which demonstrations, seminars and product presentations take place. In the spotlight this year is the art of fly-tying, with live demos taking place in the section devoted to lures. The show is geared to enthusi-

asts across a range of fishing techniques, from spinning to fly fishing, carp fishing, surf casting, big game and more. A simultaneously running Boating Show presents various watercraft, engines and components which enable sports fishing.

The fair takes place at the Fiera di Vicenza on Via Oreficaria, 16. Adults pay 17 euros; entry for ages 6-16 or holders of sports fishing licenses costs 13 euros; ages five and under enter free. Online: [pescashow.it/en](https://www.pescashow.it/en)

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

A bento box from Sushihaus Japanese Küche, in Weiden, Germany, offers a broad taste of the wide variety of items on the menu at the restaurant near the Grafenwoehr Training Area.

After Hours: Germany

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

Eating sushi in a landlocked country far from Japan is always slightly unnerving. Where did this fish come from? How could it possibly be fresh? Does the chef have any idea what he's doing?

While I can't answer any of those questions about the place I'm about to recommend, I can at least tell you that I've found a decent sushi place not far from the U.S. Army's Grafenwoehr Training Area.

While I don't think Sushihaus Japanese Küche will be competing with sushi joints in Tokyo anytime soon, it's pretty darned good compared to other sushi places in Germany that I've tried.

For one thing, the sushi isn't even the culinary star of its show, at least for me.

The menu consists of a huge list of small plates, enabling you to try a bunch of different dishes, from sushi and sashimi to grilled meats and noodles.

There are a lot of meats served skewered on sticks, like the ever-popular yakitori (grilled chicken on a stick), seasoned in special sauce and served with vegetables.

There is also a selection of teriyaki meats, which are very good. I especially liked the crispy duck teriyaki, which comes in a very large portion for its relatively inexpensive price.

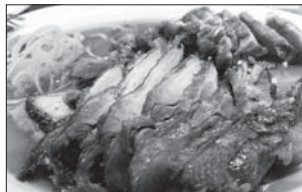
You also can't go wrong with ordering the crispy duck skin. More like crispy duck skin. That stuff is amazing. Imagine if pork rinds were actually good, and also made of duck skin. Boom! The sushi itself is all right. Not outstanding, but definitely more than palatable for anyone but a self-described sushi snob, or maybe someone who lived in Japan for a long time.

I had tuna rolls with cucumber as well as fried tempura shrimp rolls that came with a thick spicy mayonnaise-based sauce. I thought they were both pretty tasty.

If you want to try a little bit of everything, I suggest choosing a bento box, which will come with sushi rolls, a few slices of tuna and salmon sashimi, fish teriyaki, shrimp tempura and vegetables, and a salad.

But beware. If you order the bento box and think you want to try a few other things on the menu, you will more than likely get way more food than you can eat. Trust me, I've been there.

egnash.martin@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @Marty_Stripes



Sushihaus Japanese Küche's crispy duck teriyaki is almost sinfully delicious.



Sushihaus Japanese Küche supplies guests with surprisingly tasty sushi in Weiden, Germany.

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Prices: Around \$15 for most meals, several types of rolls and other small plates

Dress: Casual

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— Martin Egnash

America getting overly hooked on bowl culture

BY KRISTEN HARTKE
Special to The Washington Post

I love bowls. I own a lot of them — from pinch bowls that hold little more than a soupçon of salt to a glazed terra-cotta behemoth that my neighbor held on her lap on a plane all the way from Italy. One of my best friends owns a wooden bowl the size of a small Volkswagen that she hauls out every Halloween to hold 2,000 pieces of candy she gives to trick-or-treaters. Those kids' faces light up when they see the size of that bowl, until they find out they get only one piece each.

Because let's face it: A big plate piled with candy just isn't appealing. A bowl has a bottomless quality, and the bigger the bowl, the better. Americans like big things, so bowls have become the vessel of choice. It's getting so you can't throw a Mason jar of overnight oats without hitting a bowl full of quinoa smothered in raw kale, dried cranberries and good intentions gone wrong. We even gave it a name: "Bowl food."

Bowls represent comfort in their roundness. Our earliest memories include eating Froot Loops or mac and cheese out of bowls emblazoned with images of Peter Rabbit. Whether filled with matcho ball soup to feed a cold, or Chunky Monkey ice cream to soothe a broken heart, bowls are what we have turned to in times of crisis for generations.

Acai bowls, poke bowls, Buddha bowls. Nearly every fast-casual concept is built around a Rubenesque bowl made of paper or plastic. Line it with a grain, stabilize it with a protein, top it with a colorful array of customized vegetables or fruit. As America continues to struggle with its obesity epidemic, the bowl concept has flourished: Plates signify the meat-and-three mentality of yesteryear, while bowls seem to say, "I'm huggable and healthy!"

Because a bowl from KFC filled with mashed potatoes, fried chicken, gravy and three kinds of cheese has to be good for you. Right?

I worry about plates. What will engaged couples register for if not for a dozen delicate porcelain plates that they will only use once a year, at most, for the rest of their married lives? What will furniture makers design instead of plate racks?

COMMENTARY

We have a bias against plates. They are flat, and flat is bad. The only time flat is good is when it concerns a pancake, and pancakes are Instagrammable only when stacked on a plate, with maple syrup dripping artfully down. Then again, that stack isn't so flat, is it?

The elevation of round over flat has sneakily been making headway into our vocabulary for decades. We are skeptical of the person who "flatly denies," while giving a wink and a nod to the one who "roundly denounces." A juicy pinot noir has a round finish, while a bouillabaisse without enough garlic and fennel is pronounced flat. Flat-earthers are, obviously, out of touch with the planet's round reality.

There's a place for plates, though, and I would hate to see it lost altogether. It's hard to use a fork and knife in a bowl, but it's a piece of cake with a plate. Plates can hold a piece of lasagna, plus salad and garlic bread, all at the same time. Bowls cannot, and should not. As British etiquette expert William Hanson has written, "Only dogs eat from bowls." Of course, he also thinks Brussels sprouts shouldn't be pan-fried in olive oil, and that's just plain wrong.

I blame ramen for the demise of plates. Or maybe it's the internet, or the global economy, or cheap airfare to the other side of the world, where Americans found out that ramen wasn't just something you cooked in chipped coffee mugs in a microwave in a drunken state at 3 a.m.

And then, being Americans, we had to turn everything into a bowl of ramen, even though we're too self-conscious to eat ramen properly by hunching over and slurping from the bowl.

Then Prince Harry married an American, and they served bowl food to Queen Elizabeth at their wedding reception in a royal palace.

And that, in a nutshell — which is, after all, just a tiny nut-shaped bowl — is why the rest of the world hates America. We can't leave well enough alone. Italians have served caffè lattes in bowls for decades, which means that in the United States, frappuccino bowls can't be too far behind.

Until then, pass me a plate, please.



Tom McCorkle/For The Washington Post

Bowl options abound, but sometimes it's nice to just have a plate.

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



Freedom to create

Artists can showcase their talents without consequence at Brueckenkopf graffiti walls

BY AARON KNOWLES
Stars and Stripes

Are you looking for unique artwork without the "Louvre-ish" long lines? Tired of normal framed canvases with the scenic hilltops and softly waving sails in the distant ocean? The answer is the Brueckenkopf legal graffiti walls.

Located at 55252 Wiesbaden, underneath the Theodore-Heuss-Bruecke Bridge connecting Wiesbaden and Mainz, you can find walls, ceilings and stairwells covered in elaborate art in different styles, colors and sizes.

The constantly changing pieces are part of an art project dating back to the early 1990s. The area was left unused and later discovered by artists looking for a place to create their works. Eventually, it was established as an artistic project area by the Youth Office of Wiesbaden, and the area officially became a legal graffiti site.

According to the area's website, the idea was to create "a framework and a climate to facilitate the integration of youth potential." The Brueckenkopf legal graffiti walls allow Wiesbaden's youth to demonstrate their art while making the city less "gray."

Although there are spots in the graffiti area that allow the art to happen at any time, the majority of the painting occurs during workshops with other artists involved.

The rules are simple — don't graffiti bomb anywhere else in the area, don't litter, and no chrome paint.

The city project has added more sites to the project, but the one located near the bridge is the biggest by far.

The area is clean, not too far from restaurants and most of all, the experience will cost you no money. The art is also very family-friendly.

Online: graffititours.com

knowles.aaron@stripes.com
Twitter: @AKStripes



The Brueckenkopf legal graffiti walls are part of a project allowing Wiesbaden's youth to demonstrate their art while making the city less "gray."

AARON KNOWLES/Stars and Stripes

Hotel damage charges might be on the rise

By Christopher Elliott
Special to The Washington Post

After Doris Weller checked out of the Hampton Inn Parsippany, she assumed that she'd settled her bill. But the New Jersey hotel had a final surprise: a mysterious \$250 charge to her Discover card. A manager claimed that she'd damaged her bed, but offered no details.

"I asked him to send me a copy of the incident they wrote up," says Weller, a social worker from Wichita, Kan. "He said they had a policy internally [and] they could not provide that for me."

In recent weeks, I've seen an uptick in complaints about charges to credit cards for unspecified damages. Some readers report being billed for damaging TVs they didn't touch or for smoking in their rooms even though they never smoke.

Some evidence suggests a trend toward hotels more aggressively pursuing guests accused of damaging their rooms.

"We are starting to see more hotels making efforts to hold guests accountable for damage," says John Welty, a practice leader for Suitlife, an insurance and risk program for upscale hotels and resort properties. "However, for the hotel, proving after the fact that the guest caused the damage can be difficult."

Before continuing, a little reality check: If you've damaged anything in your room or smoked in a nonsmoking room, let the hotel know. And take responsibility for the items you damaged. A little honesty would go a long way toward eliminating the problem of false damage claims.

Industry experts say hotels typically absorb the costs related to basic nuisance claims, such as broken glassware or a broken lamp. These smaller types of claims can average between \$5,000 to \$12,000 a year for a 120-room hotel. It's considered a cost of doing business.

But on some damages, hotels can't look the other way — for example, when a dog tears up a carpet or a guest hangs a suit on a sprinkler head and sets it off.

I spoke with numerous guests and industry experts about how to avoid frivolous damage claims. All agree that guests should notify the hotel about any previous damage apparent when they first see their rooms. Some people have also suggested taking a "before" and "after" photo.

Robert Rauch, CEO of RAR Hospitality, a consulting company, says hotel guests should light unfounded charges politely. But if that doesn't work, they should quickly ratchet up the pressure.

"If a guest is charged for something that they believe is incorrect, they should contact the general manager and get a clear explanation," he says. "If you're not satisfied with the answer, there are many ways to communicate your issue. One is to negotiate in good faith that you believe the claim is false. The other is to go to social media. One good tweet will get the owner's attention."

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WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Pacific

After Hours: Okinawa

By AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

As a longtime resident of Okinawa, I often have friends and coworkers coming to me for advice on where to go and what to do on the island. The most common request? Where to enjoy a fine meal without breaking the bank.

Whether my acquaintances are celebrating a special anniversary or looking to treat visiting relatives to an upscale dining experience, it seems everyone always has the same requirements. The restaurant should be nice, but not too expensive. It should be tasteful and elegant, but not overly formal. It shouldn't be too Americanized, but should also offer plenty for picky eaters to choose from. Most importantly, the restaurant should have an incredible view of Okinawa's beautiful blue waters.

Ryukyu BBQ Blue fits the bill perfectly — it's my top suggestion for anyone in search of an unforgettable dining experience on Okinawa.

Located in Onna Village, which is famous for its coastline and many resort hotels, Ryukyu BBQ Blue part of the newly built Kafuu Resort Fuchaku Condo-Hotel. While not located on the beach, the restaurant sits on the 12th floor of the hotel's annex building and provides sweeping views of the East China Sea.

Upon entering the restaurant, diners pass by the hotel's striking infinity pool — which is, sadly, for hotel guests only. However, Kafuu Resort makes the perfect location for a staycation on the island, and a return visit as a guest will allow access to the hotel's many amenities.

As soon as my companion and I walked into Ryukyu BBQ Blue during a recent visit, we were promptly greeted by the restaurant's friendly staff. When making reservations, I had requested ocean view seats, and the scenery did not disappoint. From the restaurant's tall windows, we took in the breathtaking view of the beautiful waters below.



With so much food to choose from at Ryukyu BBQ Blue's buffet, it's easy to forget about the meat entrees you've ordered.

The restaurant is decorated using Ryukyu glassware, a famous local handicraft, which provided an elegant Okinawan flair to the dining room.

Ryukyu BBQ Blue specializes in yakiniku — a type of Japanese cuisine where diners cook a variety of cuts of meat at their table upon a small grill. For those not interested in the novelty of cooking their own meal, the restaurant also offers an extensive menu with appetizers and entrees, as well as a hot buffet station at lunchtime.

I ordered the assorted meat platter (1,980 yen, or about \$18), which came with different cuts of pork and beef, as well as some vegetables. My companion ordered the Motobu Beef Hamburg Steak (1,980 yen) and a bottle of locally brewed IPA (800 yen).

Hungry diners may choose the special lunchtime course (4,800 yen), which comes with lobster tail, assorted cuts of wagyu beef, roast beef and dessert. At dinner, pricier courses are available. There's even a special dinner set for children, which includes kid-friendly menu items such as potato salad, beef and rice in smaller portions for 1,500 yen.

As we visited during lunchtime, both of our meals came with access to the buffet. Ryukyu BBQ Blue's buffet contains many standard buffet dishes, including

salad, fruit and dessert — but what makes this buffet special is its selection of Korean-inspired cuisine.

Diners can choose from popular Korean dishes such as bibimbap, a type of rice bowl with sautéed meat and various vegetables, and jjigae, a spicy tofu-based soup. Also available during my visit was Korean-style spicy calamari, meatloaf seasoned with lemongrass and Thai basil, and stir-fried cod. With so much food to choose from at the buffet, I nearly forgot about the yakiniku platter waiting for me at our table.

The meat on my yakiniku platter was delicious and not fatty, like many cheaper yakiniku cuts can be. Any fat on the meat rendered while cooking at the table, leaving behind the perfect amount of juice and flavor. The dish came with a side of leafy lettuce to be used as wraps for the meat, which is a popular method of eating Korean-style BBQ. My companion enjoyed her hamburger steak, too, which was served on a hot stone plate that allowed her to cook the steak to her preference.

With a delicious meal laid before us and an amazing view just outside the window, we could not ask for a better setting for lunch on a Sunday afternoon.

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com



PHOTOS BY AYA ICHIHASHI/Stars and Stripes

The assorted meat platter (1,980 yen, or about \$18) comes with different cuts of pork and beef, as well as some vegetables.



Ryukyu BBQ Blue specializes in yakiniku — a type of Japanese cuisine where diners cook a variety of cuts of meat at their table upon a small grill.



Ryukyu BBQ Blue's buffet contains many standard buffet dishes, including salad, fruit and dessert.

RYUKYU BBQ BLUE

Address: 246-1 Aza Fuchaku Shirifukuchihiara Onna-son, Kunigami-gun, Okinawa 904-0413
Directions: From Kadena Air Force Base, exit the installation from Gate 1 and turn right onto Route 58. Drive for approximately 18 km. Kafuu Resort Fuchaku will be on the right, just before the Sheraton Okinawa. Ryukyu BBQ Blue is located in the resort's Annex building.
Hours: Open daily. Lunch is served between 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., with last order at 2:30 p.m. Dinner is served from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., with last order at 10 p.m.
Cost: During lunchtime, a variety of entrees such as a roast beef bowl (1,800 yen, or about \$16.30) and Korean cheese dakgalbi (2,000 yen) are available and include access to the buffet. Yakiniku courses are also available and start at 1,900 yen. At dinner, guests can dine a la carte (small plates start at 700 yen) or choose a yakiniku course (starting at 4,800 yen).
Information: kafuu-okinawa.jp/en/restaurant
— Aya Ichihashi

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Following the Green Book road

Oscar-nominated interracial movie has spurred interest in 20th-century guidebook that helped black travelers navigate segregated America

BY RUSSELL CONTRERAS
AND JAY REEVES
Associated Press

The Oscar-nominated interracial road trip movie "Green Book" has spurred interest in the real guidebook that helped black travelers navigate segregated America. With a little research, travelers can find copies of "The Negro Travelers' Green Book" online and retrace the route in the movie or develop their own tours of sites that once provided refuge to African-Americans.

The Peter Farrelly film follows an Italian-American bouncer, played by Viggo Mortensen, as he drives a prominent black classical pianist, played by Mahershala Ali, during a 1962 music tour through Jim Crow-era America. To avoid conflict and to protect the pianist, Mortensen's character uses the Green Book — a guide published from 1936 to 1966 by Harlem postal worker Victor H. Green.

The Green Book offered black travelers tips on places to eat, visit and sleep while on the road. The taverns, hotels and gas stations were often black-owned and were identified via word of mouth or through advertisements.

"Carry your Green Book with you," the book warned readers on its cover. "You may need it!"

Today, curious travelers can find copies of every edition of the Green Book for free at the New York Public Library Digital Collections or purchase replicas from the Camarillo, Calif.-based About Comics publisher. Inside, readers will find listings in almost every state with addresses of places that catered to African-American travelers amid of world of "Whites Only" restaurants, hotels and other establishments across the United States.

Some of the places featured in the travel guide still exist, at least as shadows of their former selves.

In Birmingham, Ala., the city of the final performance in the movie, the once black-owned A.G. Gaston Hotel is now part of a national monument established by then-President Barack Obama. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and aides stayed at the motel while planning demon-



RUSSELL CONTRERAS/AP

Charles Becknell Sr., 77, holds a copy of the 1954 edition of "The Negro Travelers' Green Book" on Jan. 31 at his home in Rio Rancho, N.M. Becknell, who bought the book after seeing the movie "Green Book," says he hopes to visit some of the sites.

strations against legalized racial segregation in the city in 1963.

Now abandoned and owned by the city, the motel once was an upscale haven with a restaurant and live music for blacks seeking safety in a place known as the most segregated city in America. It eventually will be refurbished as part of plans that call for it to become a centerpiece of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument.

About 90 miles to the south, in Montgomery, King often got his hair cut in a barber shop inside the Ben Moore Hotel, which was a Green Book fixture at the time King was pastoring a church in Alb-

ama's capital in the 1950s. The hotel still stands on a corner, vacant and decaying.

Meanwhile, in Albuquerque, N.M., the De Anza Motor Lodge, a business owned by Zuni trader and Indian art collector Charles G. Wallace, along the historic Route 66 is still standing, barely. It offered black motorists opportunities for a good night's rest and a chance to catch a nearby show of American Indian and Mexican. American duo-wop singers. The motel was listed in some editions of the Green Book and is undergoing renovation after years of being abandoned.

The Threatt Filling Station in Luther, Okla., is on the National Register



RUSSELL CONTRERAS/AP

For decades, "The Negro Travelers' Green Book" was once considered an essential guide to help black travelers navigate segregated America.

of Historic Places for its distinction as a black-owned filling station along the Route 66 "Mother Road." The Threatt family's recent partnership with historians to preserve the former station and the movie "Green Book" have brought about a renaissance of sorts for the structure, The Oklahoman reported in December.

Charles Becknell Sr., 77, of Rio Rancho, N.M., said he bought a 1954 edition of the Green Book online after he saw the movie. The retired educator plans on visiting some of the sites mentioned in the book to see what's there now. "I also wanted my grandchild to see this book for themselves," Becknell said.

To be sure, some of the sites mentioned in the Green Book no longer exist and the buildings that once housed them have been replaced or torn down.

Frank's Restaurant in New York City's Harlem neighborhood, advertised in the 1959 Green Book edition, is long gone and a new defunct discount store occupies the spot. The former Booker Washington Hotel and Courts in San Francisco, which once offered black travelers "splendidly decorated suites" and a "cocktail lounge," is now a Safeway grocery store and apartments.

Still, visitors can use the guide to visit the sites and see how a place that once provided safe haven has evolved and contemplate what it meant for black travelers more than 50 years ago.

The movie "Green Book" is nominated for best picture at the 91st Academy Awards scheduled to air Sunday on ABC and live Monday on AFN-Movie.



JAY REEVES/AP



RUSSELL CONTRERAS/AP

The closed De Anza Motor Lodge, shown June 24, 2016, sits along Route 66 in Albuquerque, N.M. It was one of the few places that allowed black travelers to stay during segregated times.

Left: The exterior of the old Ben Moore Hotel, once mentioned in the "Green Book" for black travelers, on Feb. 12 in Montgomery, Ala. The hotel, located near Alabama's Capitol, is abandoned.

'Carry your Green Book with you. You may need it!'

The cover of the "Negro Travelers' Green Book"

WEEKEND: BOOKS

By DONALD LIEBENSON

Special to The Washington Post

When he was a sophomore in high school almost a half-century ago, three words changed Gary Sinise's life: "Come and audition." As he relates in his new memoir, "Grateful American," those words came from Barbara Patterson, the formidable drama department head at Highland Park High School outside Chicago, where the performing arts were as much a priority as sports.

Up to that point, Sinise had been an indifferent student who played in a rock band. Rebellious, he frequented the school's "Glass Hallway," a corridor notorious as the hangout of the school's longhairs, slackers and stoners. Patterson, casting "West Side Story," thought Sinise would make a good gang member.

And just like that, Sinise's life was transformed. "I found this new place that felt like home," the actor said during a recent phone interview. Fresh out of high school, he co-founded the Tony-winning Steppenwolf Theatre Company. It initially operated on a shoestring in a Highland Park church basement. Now, 45 years later, it occupies its own multimillion-dollar facility in Chicago's Lincoln Park. Meanwhile, Sinise became a celebrated fixture on screen: He won an Emmy for his lead role in the TV biopic "George Wallace" and played haunted Gulf War vet and detective Mac Taylor for nine seasons on "CSI: NY." But he's best known as the grievously injured and psychologically scarred Lt. Dan in "Forrest Gump," a role that earned him an Oscar nomination but also steered his life into one devoted to service. Patterson may have sealed Sinise's fate, but the 1994 drama gave his life meaning in a new way.

"Grateful American" isn't your typical navel-gazing celebrity dispatch. The plain-spoken, Midwest-grounded Sinise has always been about the work and not the fame, so he resisted prodding by his agents and managers to write a memoir. When he decided it was time, he determined that instead of a chronicle of his Glass Hallway-to-stardom journey, he would reflect on a life enriched by "blessings, gratitude and giving back," he said.

He chronicled an incident from his first play to set the stage for these themes.

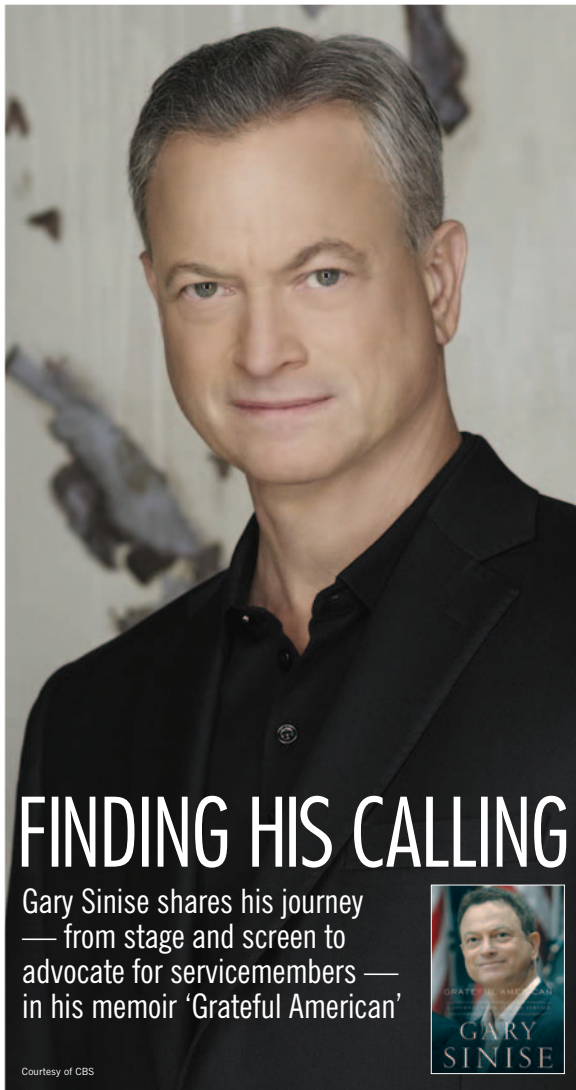
During "West Side Story's" first curtain call, Sinise, a supporting player, was pulled from the back of the stage by one of the show's leads, Jeff Melvoin, to take his bows upfront with the show's stars. "I don't know why he did that, or if he would even remember," Sinise said of Melvoin, who went on to become the Emmy-winning writer and producer of "Northern Exposure." "It meant so much to me."

What Melvoin does "vividly" remember is that "Gary was beloved by everybody," he recalled in the conversation.

"He became the heartbeat of the production," Melvoin said. "We all knew how much the show meant to Gary, and it would have been just a very natural thing to recognize this person who we cared for so much for his passion."

"Grateful American" is the story of how Sinise felt compelled to redirect that passion on behalf of American troops, wounded veterans and first responders and their families.

In 2011, he created the Gary Sinise Foundation, which last year raised \$35 million. Among its programs is the construction of specially adapted smart homes for severely wounded veterans that are provided mortgage-free. Sinise also leads the Lt. Dan Band, which has performed hundreds of shows on concert stages, at military bases and in war



FINDING HIS CALLING

Gary Sinise shares his journey — from stage and screen to advocate for servicemembers — in his memoir 'Grateful American'

Courtesy of CBS

zones. Sinise writes that he hopes the book inspires readers to "overcome obstacles, embrace gratitude and engage in service above self."

The book does contain some startling personal admissions, including a harrowing section about his wife, actress Moira Harris, and her struggles with alcoholism. "I was not going to include it in the book unless she was supportive of that," he said. But out of that darkness, the family found their faith and their church, and Harris told her husband that she hoped this difficult chapter might help somebody going through a similar situation.

Sinise's connection to and appreciation of the military preceded his portrayal of Lt. Dan. His grandfather fought on the front lines at the Battle of the Argonne Forest in France in World War I. One of his uncles flew 30 missions over Europe as a navigator aboard a B-17 bomber during World War II. Another served on a U.S. Navy ship. His father was a Navy photographer during the Korean War. Sinise himself was conceived on a naval base, he noted.

Sinise came of age during the Vietnam War era, but given his family's military service, he was not caught up in anti-war sentiment. Any protests he attended in high school were a dodge to get out of class.

"If you could prove you went to a moratorium, the teachers would be OK with it," he said with a laugh.

When Steppenwolf was established, he mounted plays such as "Tracers" that portrayed the reality and psychology of the Vietnam experience. He also instituted veterans' nights at the theater, offering free admission to those who served (this program is still in place).

The tragedy of 9/11 was the "terrible catalyst" that galvanized his commitment to the military, he said. When visiting hospitals and war zones, "a few people might know who Gary Sinise is, but everybody has seen 'Forrest Gump' and knew who Lt. Dan was," he said. "I'd walk into a hospital room with a guy missing his arms and legs and he'd want to talk about Lt. Dan."

That character suffers physically and emotionally after he loses his legs in combat. But by the end of the movie, "he is married, in a successful business and back up on his legs," Sinise said.

"He is moving on with his life. That was a story not often seen on screen, and that's what I'm devoting my life to right now; trying to provide hopeful support."

At a time when even performing at the Super Bowl has become politicized, Sinise pointedly does not talk politics either in the book or in an interview. Although he's known as one of few conservatives in Hollywood — and he contributed money to the campaigns of the late senator John McCain, which also aligned with his pro-veteran mission, and Mitt Romney — he says he feels strongly that politics has no place when it comes to supporting the troops. This attitude was influenced by the ill treatment many soldiers from Vietnam received when they returned from that unpopular war.

He's more interested in unifying messages, and if "Grateful American" has one, it's the recurring phrase "I can do more." Over the past 40 years, Sinise has received several humanitarian awards as well as the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest honor the president can bestow on a civilian, but he's far from done growing the foundation to expand its impact and support.

"The more I did, the more I felt I could do and the more I wanted to do," he said. "God pointed me in this direction and said you've had a lot of success; do some good with it."

WEEKEND: BOOKS



EPIC IN THE MAKING

Marlon James immersed himself in mythology and history to write new book

Courtesy of Mark Seliger



'Black Leopard, Red Wolf'

Marlon James

"Black Leopard, Red Wolf" rises up from the mists of time, glistering like viscera. Marlon James has spun an African fantasy as vibrant, complex and haunting as any Western mythology.

Tracker, the narrator, makes a name for himself as a kind of medieval private investigator. "It has been said that I have a nose," he admits, but it's more like a superpower: the ability to track people by their scent over hundreds of miles.

Tracker's success eventually gets him an assignment that becomes the novel's central storyline. In a time of cataclysmic political upheaval and rumors of war between competing kingdoms, powerful people want to retrieve a missing boy. Who this boy is, who took him and even who wants him back are questions that remain as mysterious as where the boy might be.

Tracker's team includes a reticent buffalo, a witch who rises up from a puddle of oil, an archivist who's also a master swordsman and a melancholy giant who won't stop lamenting his kills. But the most endearing of these characters is Tracker's lover, a man who changes at will into a leopard.

James handles a string of awe-some adventures on this quest for the missing boy. Tracker and his violent companions explore lush jungles, cities in the sky and a dark forest where the memory of elephants charges through the trees. Dare to enter this realm, and you'll confront a catalog of the continent's creatures: ferocious trolls, giant bats and a bloodsucking fiend made entirely of flies.

James has constructed this book with the same joints as the old epics, episodes of gripping intensity linked loosely together in an arc that resolves itself only at a distance. Scene by scene, the fights are cinematic spectacles, spellbinding blurs of violence set to the sounds of clanging swords and tearing tendons. Beneath all these hair-raising fights and chases thrum profound issues of identity and freedom that resonate in our own far less brutish era.

"Black Leopard, Red Wolf" is an extraordinarily violent novel, including a surfeit of sexual attacks. The ancient world is not a pretty or kind place: Men, women and children are tortured and raped to death. But that only makes Tracker's concealed tenderness more poignant. Cast out, he feels the pain that all discarded beings feel, especially the littles and most despised ones. He'd cut out my tongue for saying it, but beneath that impervious exterior is a kind and gentle soul.

—Ron Charles
The Washington Post

Jordan, Warner Bros. take film rights to James' novel

Michael B. Jordan's Outlier Society and Warner Bros. have acquired the film rights to the epic fantasy novel "Black Leopard, Red Wolf" by Marlon James.

Set in a world of competing kingdoms and violent political upheaval, the book follows a character known as Tracker, who has a keen sense of smell and is hired to find a missing child. His best friend is the shape-shifting Black Leopard.

"Black Leopard, Red Wolf" is the first acquisition since Warner Bros. signed Jordan's Outlier Society to a first-look deal.

Jordan, known for starring in the "Creed" films as well as playing Erik Killmonger in the Academy Award-nominated "Black Panther," founded the production company in 2016.

—Los Angeles Times

"The Hobbit." I was like, "Lord, God, here we go again. We're gonna have this argument about representation." I'm gonna say, "Why aren't there people of color in this cast?" He went: "Lord of the Rings' is British history and British mythology." And I looked at him and went, "Dude, 'Lord of the Rings' isn't real. If I had been to the Shire and saw an Asian or East Indian hobbit, nobody would have cared." I got tired of arguing for representation. It set me on a mission of discovery.

Representation is a big deal to you.

I remember when "The 13th Warrior" came out (in 1999), and I heard the warrior was going to be a Moor. I'm here thinking, Denzel (Washington). Instead, it's Antonio Banderas! And it's not a knock on Antonio Banderas, but even in films where I expected to see people like myself, they weren't there.

You had an impulse to do something, but did you know what it would be?

No. I was talking to Melina Matsoukas, who directs a lot of Beyoncé videos and directed "Insecure." She was talking to me about this TV show which I still haven't seen, "The Affair," about how, in it, the

man and the woman are telling stories. They think they're telling the same story, but the stories don't add up, even in very simple ways. And she was like, this is a good idea for a TV show. And I was like, "Forget the TV show, this is good idea for a novel." That was the eureka moment where I instantly knew what the trilogy would be ... three versions of the same story.

"Black Leopard, Red Wolf" feels cinematic in style and scope.

I'm very suspicious of people who write books aiming for them to become movies. Sometimes you can just tell. At the same time, I write books that are cinematic because I'm so influenced by cinema. In a lot of ways, I'm more influenced by cinema than by books. I still enter a scene like I'm going to storyboard it.

I also like the economy of cinema. And that cinema depends a lot on the sensory. It's like I tell my students, a sunset doesn't need your help. The natural world itself is unique, brilliant, poetic, dark, dangerous and sexy all by itself. That's something I learned from cinema.

"This novel lands post-'Black Panther.' Just like the movie, you're telling a story with a cultural confidence and muscularity that's very different from what we've used to seeing."

For me, Africa, the continent, was a huge reservoir of ideas, mythologies, legends, histories. I can literally dive in, pull out some items and make a story—just as how George R.R. Martin can go into Viking lore or Cixin Liu can go into some Chinese lore. To me, it's going back to the myths. We always have to go back to the myths.

What surprised you in your research?

A lot of people think I'm dealing with things like gender identity and queerness and homosexuality and varieties of sexual experiences because I'm trying to make the novel contemporary. Those are the oldest elements in the book. That came from the research. Addressing people as "they"? Sorry, people, Africa did that 4,000 years ago. Recognizing queerness and not having antipathy for homosexuality and homosexuals—that's nothing new. The African continent was always ready for that kind of stuff until white American preachers told them that they weren't.

By ROHAN PRESTON
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Marlon James, the Macalester College professor with a meteoric writing career, will spend the next several months promoting "Black Leopard, Red Wolf," a rangy new fantasy filled with mystical, magical and shape-shifting characters. It's the first entry in his Dark Star trilogy, promising three perspectives on a single epic set in ancient Africa. It's also his first book since the 2015 international blockbuster "A Brief History of Seven Killings," with its 22 foreign language translations.

We recently spoke with the Man Booker Prize-winning author by phone.

We know you for historical fiction such as "A Brief History of Seven Killings" and "The Book of Night Women." Now you've leapt into another genre, fantasy.

That comes from growing up in Jamaica and reading what I could get my hands on. I don't know how people end up with genre snobbery. I was not rich enough for that. You read the book somebody dumped. You read the book somebody left behind from the previous class. That's how I came across (Gabriel Garcia Marquez's) "One Hundred Years of Solitude." I'm reading Sidney Sheldon, but I'm also reading Tennessee Williams, O. Henry, Shakespeare. And I'm reading tons and tons of comics. And it didn't occur to me that these are different things judged in different ways until I went to a lit class.

Did that make you adopt a literary hierarchy?

Thankfully, I never fully absorbed the whole idea that one sort of literature is more valuable than the other. I think that helps me when I write. Yes, I can shift all over the place in terms of subject matter. To me, though, it doesn't seem as dramatic a shift as it may seem to other people. Maybe I just have a really terrible attention span or get easily bored. If we're going by what Toni Morrison said—write the books you want to read—these are the books I want to read.

Tell me about the genesis for your Dark Star trilogy.

It began with a fight I was having with a friend when they announced the cast for

WEEKEND: MUSIC



Courtesy of The Green Room PR

Ronnie Dunn, left, and Kix Brooks noticed that many of today's country singers were covering their hits in concert, an observation that led to collaborations with some of those artists on "Reboot." Brooks & Dunn have had more than 20 No. 1 country hits.

Not a nostalgia act

Brooks & Dunn rework hits with new class of country stars

By KRISTIN M. HALL
Associated Press

Country superstar duo Brooks & Dunn got back in the studio together for the first time in about a decade to rework their classic songs with the next generation of country stars, including Kacey Musgraves, Kane Brown and Luke Combs.

The new covers album called "Reboot," which will be released April 5, shows the timelessness of the duo's catalog of more than 20 No. 1 country hits, which has continued to influence a new generation of country singers. The idea came from noticing that many newer acts were covering Brooks & Dunn hits in their live shows. "A couple of acts, like Luke Combs, were playing our music," Kix Brooks said. "Ronnie shows me this online live version of 'Neon Moon' that Kacey Musgraves was doing."

After their manager suggested a collaborative covers album, Dunn said he thought none of the artists they reached out to would actually want to do it. He was wrong. "Everybody called back," Dunn said. "Everybody had a song they



"Reboot," which will be released April 5, includes collaborations with current country music stars such as Thomas Rhett, Jon Pardi, Ashley McBryde, Brothers Osborne, Brett Young, Midland, Cody Johnson, Lanco and Tyler Booth.

wanted to do and, lo and behold, they wanted us to be in the studio with them when they did it."

The Dan Huff-produced record includes a mix of today's country hit makers, and it comes as many contemporary country artists are feeling nostalgic about the boom era of country music in the 1990s. Alongside Garth Brooks and Shania Twain, Brooks & Dunn dominated the decade, selling tens of millions of records with hits like "Boot Scootin' Boogie," "Hard Workin' Man" and "My Maria." After 20 years and more than 20 No. 1 hits, the duo split up in 2010 and they both started working on solo projects. They reunited in 2015 for what's turned into a four-year residency in Las Vegas with Reba McEntire, but they hadn't been in the studio together for a decade. The two Grammy-winning artists said getting back in the studio together felt natural.

"It's like riding a bike," Dunn said. "Just get out there and knock the rust off of it." Some of their collaborators wanted to stick close to the original recordings. Others, like Brothers Osborne and Musgraves, came up with new twists on the classics.

"It's good to see these songs that you've written or been a part of morph and take on a different place and live through it," Dunn said.

"There's identifiable licks and whatever in your songs and if you don't abandon a lot of the core of what was in those original recordings, you can do some fun stuff," Brooks said.

The first two songs to be released from the project are "Brand New Man" with Combs and "Believe" with Brown, with the full track listing to be announced later.

The two still perform outside of Las Vegas, mostly at festivals, but their residency with McEntire is the longest-running current country residency in Sin City now that they've added more shows in 2019. Many top-tier acts like Lady Gaga, Christina Aguilera and Cardi B are putting down roots in the city this year as well.

Dunn said they've even gotten to try some of the new arrangements during their live shows.

"It's cool to be inspired at this stage of the game by some of the stuff these guys are doing because it rolls right into our wheelhouse," Dunn said.

REVIEWS

Various Artists

Music Inspired by the Film Roma (Sony Music Masterworks)



Beck, Patti Smith, Uncle DJ Shadow and Billie Eilish are part of a large and diverse group performing songs inspired by Alfonso Cuarón's "Roma," resulting in an album that has plenty of good music but with few direct links to the film.

The film's soundtrack was based on songs played by Mexican radio stations in the 1970s, most by Mexican artists like Jose Jose and Javier Solis.

Most of the 15 tracks on this album are originals written by some of Cuarón's favorite musicians, including Cafe Tacuba's Quique Rangel and Asaf Avidan, and today you'd search far and wide — and probably without success — for a commercial broadcaster with a playlist this varied.

French sister duo They'si's "Cleo Who Takes Care of You" references the movie — Cleo is the maid at the core of "Roma," a Mexico City neighborhood.

Other top songs include "Con el Viento" by a fragile-sounding but determined Jessie Reyzer, Michael Kiwanuka singing on Uncle's "On My Knees," and Beck's fascinating, orchestrated "Tarantula" — an early '80s U.K. pearl by Colourbox — where he sounds like Robert Plant doing a Bryan Ferry impression.

After Laura Marling's stately take on "Those Were the Days," which can be heard by Ray Conniff in the film, T Bone Burnett's "Roma" feels like someone ripping off your earphones while you were daydreaming. It ends the album with four minutes of hammering percussion and sounds of the city. The dream is over, but life has to go on.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press

Avril Lavigne

Head Above Water (BMG)



It's great news that Avril Lavigne has recovered enough from her battle with Lyme disease to record music again. And the title track of "Head Above Water" tells the story of that struggle well, using a dramatic ballad and more forceful use of her powerful voice to great effect.

These new songs, her first since 2013's "Avril Lavigne" album, are clearly personal, dealing with relationship woes as well as her health issues. And nearly all lean more toward the pop world than the pop-rock line she used to straddle with hits like "Complicated" or "Sk8er Boi."

The problem is, she doesn't always navigate that would very well. Sometimes, it's a lyrical problem — like in "Goddess," where she mispronounces "bananas" so it rhymes with "pajamas." Sometimes it's a phrasing problem — like the way she slips into vocal fry in the serious "I Fell in Love With the Devil" as she talks about "teddy bears" and "I'm sorry."

The issues on "Head Above Water" are numerous, but generally minor. The fact that easily addressed things were left in means Lavigne likely wanted them that way, leaving her comeback slightly short of where it could have gone.

— Glenn Gamboa
Newsday

WEEKEND: MUSIC

COMMENTARY

From left, Dua Lipa, St. Vincent, Cardi B and Kacey Musgraves.

AP photos

ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN MOORES/Stars and Stripes

Picking up the tempo

The Grammys looked like the beginning of the end for one-sided music industry

BY LORRAINE ALI
Los Angeles Times

The 61st Annual Grammy Awards appeared to be an exemplary model of diversity and progress as an unprecedented number of female artists—including Cardi B, making history as the first solo woman to win for rap album and Kacey Musgraves, who won the night's album of the year prize—dominated the evening's live performances. Alicia Keys (not LL Cool J or James Corden) hosted. And a notable number of black artists were nominated in mainstream categories outside of rap and R&B.

But it was clear from who wasn't at the Staples Center that all was not well. The Recording Academy's fraught relationship with women and artists of color played a starring role during a ceremony that was as much an ode to diversity as it was a reparation effort.

What were they making up for? More than a half a century of operating like most other entertainment mediums until movements such as #OscarsSoWhite, #MeToo and #TimesUp forced the first real signs of change in the TV and film industries.

The music industry has been slow to catch up. Last year, just one woman won a solo award during the telecast. And it didn't seem the organization felt any pressure to change things up when the chief executive of the Recording Academy, Neil Portnow, said women in music should "step up" to advance their careers.

It was the same year that Kendrick Lamar was passed over by the academy for an album that went on to win a Pulitzer. His Grammy snub followed a pattern of rappers such as Jay-Z being asked to perform, making the show look diverse, only to be passed over for wins in pop and mainstream categories. This year, the Grammys became the latest awards show to visibly struggle with the overwhelming calls for change. Childish Gambino, who won in three major categories including best record, wasn't there to pick up his awards. Neither was Ariana Grande, who won in the pop category. It was as if they were taunting academy voters when, during commercial breaks, emojis of both artists appeared in separate ads for Apple Memoji and Google Playmoji, singing the songs they probably

would have performed on the Staples Center stage had they agreed to appear.

Best album nominee Lamar, who led with eight nominations, also refused to attend. Drake, up for best album and six more awards, surprised everyone when he showed up to receive his award for rap song. But he took the opportunity to voice the frustration of a generation of artists locked out by a mainly white, mainly male voting body.

"This is a business where it's up to a bunch of people who might not understand what a mixed-race kid from Canada is saying, or a fly Spanish girl from New York. The point is, you've already won if you have people who are singing your songs word for word, if you're a hero in your hometown. Look, if there's people who have regular jobs who are coming out in the rain and snow, spending their hard-earned money to buy tickets to your shows, you don't need this [Grammy award] right here. I promise you. You already won."

Grande tweeted that she had a dispute with producers over what she wanted to perform. "It was when my creativity & self expression was stifled by you, that I decided not to attend," she posted.

The Grammys did make changes after last year's ceremony to be more inclusive and representative of today's music industry. This year, eight acts rather than five competed in the top four categories of album, record, song of the year and best new artist.

The 3½-hour show opened with the Latin music number "Havana" led by Camila Cabello and featuring Colombian rapper J Balvin and Ricky Martin.

But it was clear the show had a female empowerment theme when Keys opened things alongside Michelle Obama, Jada Pinkett Smith, Jennifer Lopez and Lady Gaga, who shared what music meant to them. They kicked off one of the more spontaneous ceremonies in memory, which included 20-plus performances by artists ranging from Dolly Parton with Miley Cyrus to best new artist winner Dua Lipa with St. Vincent.

Not everyone, however, appeared comfortable. And after Janelle Monáe's bombastic performance of "Django Jane"—in which she shouted the lyric, "Let the vagina have a menologue"—there was no way the agro funk of the Red Hot Chili Peppers could look

anything but out of place.

The major artists who didn't show spoke volumes with their silence, but the effort to make the Grammys relevant and representative of the artists it's supposed to honor might have been better served if, say, Donald Glover (aka Gambino) had been there to take the mike. His winning number, "This Is America," speaks for itself, as does the "Black Panther" soundtrack by Lamar.

In film and TV, it took outspoken actors and behind-the-scenes folks speaking out against a white, patriarchal system—at the ceremonies that had overlooked them for so long—to finally crack open the doors. The Emmys and Golden Globes were the latest proof. Music isn't there yet. Just take a look at a University of Southern California Annenberg study that showed there's a long way for women to go in the record business. But the Grammys looked like the beginning of the end for a tradition that's woefully out of touch with the medium it's meant to honor.

The Recording Academy's fraught relationship with women and artists of color played a starring role during a ceremony that was as much an ode to diversity as it was a reparation effort.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Taking the road less traveled

‘Metro Exodus’ rewards those willing to take a thoughtful approach

By BRIAN BOWERS
Stars and Stripes

I love a good post-apocalyptic romp among vicious mutants and cut-throat brigades. I like it even more when my actions have consequences beyond the body count.

Games of the “Metro” franchise have delivered that quite nicely, and the latest entry is no exception.

“Metro Exodus” — developed by Ukrainian studio 4A Games for Deep Silver — uses a karma system that rewards you for taking the road less traveled. In gameworld, that means a road on which you don’t blow the head



off everyone you meet. Of course, you can run through every mission with guns blazing, but there are ramifications for taking that course. In addition to gaining a better ending for your adventure, there are a few benefits that are best left unspoiled.

You play as Artyom, who has spent the past 20 years fighting for his life in the subways beneath the blasted and irradiated city of Moscow, the setting for the first two “Metro” games as well as the novels by Dmitry Glukhovsky.

Artyom is certain there is human life beyond the subway system. Thanks to an unpleasant encounter with a faction known as Hansa, Artyom learns that his suspicions are true.

It’s not long before Artyom, his wife Anna, a wizened engineer and a group of Spartans led by his father-in-law Col. Miller — short for Melnikov — head across Russia in a coal-fired locomotive they’ve christened Aurora. Since the circumstances surrounding their departure from Moscow were a bit complicated, they need to find a new home — preferably one with a minimal number of mutants and without lethal levels of radiation.

As the party spends the next year of game time exploring what’s left of the Motherland, “Metro Exodus” provides a combination of linear missions and open-world exploration.

The game’s linear missions offer interesting challenges, well-designed battlegrounds and aggressive enemies — including an abundance of mutants. Much of the time, they’re a guilt-free treat for those with itchy trigger fingers.

Three other adventures are set in large sandboxes that offer differing environments and inhabitants, which encourages the use of different tactics. These settings offer a variety of missions, some related to the overall storyline and others that are optional. They allow you to explore, gather loot and fight a range of mutant critters — ranging from the familiar batlike “demons” of the previous games to enormous catfish and giant gorillas — and countless bloodthirsty thugs.

Combat is similar to the previous games. Limited ammo and the judgmental



Protagonist Artyom emerges from the subways underneath irradiated Moscow, Russia, to survive aboveground in a post-apocalyptic wasteland in “Metro Exodus.”

Photos courtesy of 4A Games



eye of the karma system are incentives for relying more on stealth and nonlethal takedowns than on running and gunning — at least when facing human opponents. Fortunately, many enemies aren’t especially intelligent, so it’s not usually too hard to get the drop on them.

The selection of weapons is wide enough to get the job done — pistols, assault rifles, shotguns, pneumatic rifles and crossbows. Each can be upgraded and customized to a good degree if you keep an eye peeled for new parts among your dead or unconscious foes.

You can upgrade your weapons and create some ammo on the fly thanks to a

special backpack. However, if you want to craft bullets, shotgun shells or survival items — such as gas mask filters — or upgrade your armor, you’ll need to return to your workbench on the train or find one of those scattered around the battlegrounds. You’ll also need a workbench to perform maintenance on your weapons, important if you want to avoid jammed guns in sticky situations.

Despite the enjoyable gameplay, “Metro Exodus” doesn’t quite deliver an epic story to match the scope of its cross-country journey. The overarching story is very interesting, but it seems stitched together rather than a seamless whole. Also, epics

demand compelling characters, and the game falters a bit here. The party members are a diverse lot with intriguing backstories, but the Russian-accented voice acting is rather stilted and frequently emotionless. Since the comrades spend a lot of time talking — if you’re willing to listen — that’s a big problem.

The graphics are good, but not great. The facial renderings are very good, but character animations are pretty stiff. Backgrounds can get repetitive, especially when the train is in motion. And visual glitches aren’t uncommon — the bodies of fallen foes gyrating on the ground, gear floating in midair and the like.

The controls are pretty efficient. Combat was always smooth, fast and rewarding. Oddly, movement outside of combat could be a bit clunky at times.

The game earns its mature rating because of violence, a few topless prostitutes in one scene and an exceptionally large dose of vulgar language.

Bottom line: B+ “Metro Exodus” offers the opportunity to take Artyom beyond Moscow’s Metro. It’s a journey well worth making.

Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC
Online: metrothegame.com

Overall grade: **B+**



More game reviews at [stripes.com/games](https://www.stripes.com/games)

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

“Robin Hood”: Director Otto Bathurst (“Black Mirror”) opted to make his “Robin Hood” a production that embraces all the common elements of the story of Robin of Loxley (Taron Egerton), Marian (Eve Hewson) and all the supporting players including the evil Sheriff of Nottingham (Ben Mendelsohn), but presents them with a modern touch. Bathurst’s approach is to present a story set in the Middle Ages where elements from firelights to wardrobe appeal to a modern audience.

Casting Egerton to play Robin was a smart move. He has the kind of boyish charms Tom Cruise shows off in his action movies, and he’s created a foundation with his work in the “Kingsman” franchise.

If your idea of a Robin Hood story is a group of Merry Men hanging around in Sherwood Forest waiting for an opportunity to enter an archery contest, this will leave you heading to the little john. Looking at the work as a mashup of a traditional story with a contemporary approach makes for mindless fun.



Lionsgate

Jamie Foxx, left, and Taron Egerton star in “Robin Hood,” now available on DVD.

Also available on DVD:

“A Star Is Born”: Lady Gaga stars in this latest version of the story of fame and falling in love.

“Sgt. Will Gardner”: Iraq War veteran’s (Max Martini) journey of recovery is side-lined by his battle with PTSD.

“Overlord”: Team of American paratroopers comes face to face with Nazi super-soldiers.

“American Masters: Sammy Davis, Jr.: I’ve Gotta Be Me”: First major film documentary to examine the performer’s vast career.

“NOVA: Operation Bridge Rescue”: Bridge built in 1855 is repaired after being destroyed by a hurricane.

“The Return of the Vampire”: Bela Lugosi stars in the 1943 about a vampire revived during a London Blitz.

“The Last Race”: Documentary on a small-town stock car racetrack and the drivers that race there.

“Can You Ever Forgive Me?”: Author’s realization she’s no longer popular leads to lies, deceit and criminal actions to get back on top. Melissa McCarthy stars.

“Backtrace”: Lone surviving thief of an armored-car robbery is sprung from prison and administered an experimental drug. Sylvester Stallone stars.

“Narcissister Organ Player”: Documentary examines one of the contemporary art world’s most acclaimed mixed-media and performance artists.

“Backbeat”: The 1994 film about fifth Beatle Stuart Sutcliffe is being re-released.

“Rise of the Footsoldier III: The Final Chapter”: Craig Fairbrass returns as gangster Pat Tate in the conclusion of the “Footsoldier” trilogy.

“Iceman: The Time Traveler”: A Ming Dynasty palace guard who was frozen is brought back to life in the present.

—Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service

Questions are still out there

History Channel’s ‘Project Blue Book’ examines real-life close encounters



History Channel

Laura Mennell and Aiden Gillen star in “Project Blue Book.” The show premieres March 6 on AFN-Spectrum.

By RICK BENTLEY
Tribune News Service

The mantra of the Fox series “The X-Files” was that the truth was out there, but the production spent episode after episode dealing with out-of-this-world creatures and mythical characters from other worlds. The new History Channel series “Project Blue Book,” which premieres March 6 on AFN-Spectrum, also looks at close encounters with UFOs, but everything is based on true events.

The program’s basis follows the experiences of Dr. J. Allen Hynek, a college professor who was recruited by the U.S. Air Force to head a secret operation known as Project Blue Book. The government program looked into thousands of reports regarding unidentified flying objects, with more than 700 of those reports still classified as unsolved.

Hynek’s books were an inspiration for director Steven Spielberg to make the 1977 feature film “Close Encounters of the Third Kind.” “Project Blue Book” executive producer Sean Jablonski stresses there is no need to fictionalize the stories because the truth in the declassified reports is so compelling. “There’s so many unanswered questions that we get to play around with,” Jablonski says. “We’re also making a great TV show, so we want to make sure that it’s got some wonderful drama. And we have such great character interactions. Too, that it’s a nice devoted.”

Among the reports featured in the 10-episode series include the Flatwoods Monster incident in West Virginia, the Gorman Dogfight of Fargo, N.D., the

Lubbock Lights of Lubbock, Texas, and the Chiles-Whitted UFO encounter of Montgomery, Ala.

“Project Blue Book” creator David O’Leary was inspired by the 12,000 cases the program looked into from 1952 to 1969. It wasn’t just people sitting on their back porches who reported incidents, but also commercial airline pilots with trained eyes.

The truth that is revealed through “Project Blue Book” ends up being that actual events can take as many twists and turns as a work of fiction.

Aiden Gillen (“Game of Thrones”), who plays Hynek, likes that the series is based on actual events because he knows the truth is often far stranger than fiction. And the truth that is revealed through “Project Blue Book” ends up being that actual events can take as many twists and turns as a work of fiction.

Gillen’s research into Hynek showed while his theories on alien visitation changed over the years, his basic opinion never wavered.

“I think, certainly starting out, Hynek thought that the nuts and bolts — the idea of this as an actual physical craft coming from somewhere else — was

pretty unlikely,” Gillen says. “But he did have these other beliefs. And especially when he was younger. He was reading a lot of Rudolf Steiner and had an interest in the Rosicrucians and the idea that there are other dimensions or that there’s a veil between this world and something else.”

Joining Gillen in the cast is Neal McDonough (“Legends of Tomorrow”), who portrays Gen. James Harding, a confident and perceptive general responsible for heading Project Blue Book. As a devout Christian, McDonough’s view of the world is based on the Bible. But working on “Project Blue Book” has made him think.

“What if there was another plan? What if there are other things out there? I look at the sky now with my kids and my wife and I think differently after doing a show like this. And it’s not just because it’s a great-looking show. It’s the ‘50s. It’s got all the eye candy. It’s got the wardrobe. It’s got the sets. It’s got the cars. It looks great,” McDonough says. “But the amazing thing about what History has done with (executive producer) Robert Zemeckis is they put together this show that makes us think.

“And to have a show like that give us pause and think what else is out there. Are there other things? I love that about this show and I think that’s what the audience is really going to gravitate towards.”

As to whether or not UFOs are real, McDonough says the more important point to remember is the public is fascinated with the subject. He calls the curiosity about whether there is something out there just part of being human.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



(iStock photo)

If you snore, there are health reasons to see a doctor about it

By EMILY SOHN
Special to The Washington Post

Snoring is the top reason that patients come to see Jennifer Hsia, a sleep surgeon at University of Minnesota Health in Minneapolis. Most of the time, they come in not because they are worried about their health, but because their partner has been complaining about the noise.

"It's very rare that I have someone come in and say, 'I think I have sleep apnea,'" she says. "It's more, 'I'm snoring quite badly and my bed partner wants me to do something about it.'"

Even if the person you sleep with doesn't care, it's worth seeing a doctor if you snore, experts say. Although there may be nothing to worry about, accumulating evidence suggests a link between snoring and cardiovascular disease. Snoring can also be a sign of sleep apnea, a more serious disorder that causes people to periodically stop breathing in their sleep.

"All people that have sleep apnea snore, but not all people who snore have sleep apnea," says Ricardo Osorio, a sleep expert and neuroscientist at NYU Langone Medical Center in New York. Getting evaluated is the only way to know for sure.

"If the snoring is bad and you have witnessed apneas and there is some suspicion of daytime sleepiness or poor performance at work or risk of car accident because you're sleeping at the wheel, go to a sleep doctor," he says.

Snoring happens because our throats are made of soft tissues without rigid structures, Hsia says. As you fall asleep, the throat muscles relax, which causes your airway to narrow. To pass through a now-smaller tube, air then has to move more quickly, producing turbulent airflow that vibrates anything floppy or loose in the back of your throat, such as the uvula or soft palate. That vibration causes the jackhammer-like noise of snoring.

It's not clear why only some of us snore, Hsia says. But there are some trends: People become more likely to snore with age, as the throat tissues get looser. Being overweight can crush the airways, raising the risk of snoring. And men tend to snore more than women. Having a drink before bed can also exacerbate snoring because alcohol is a muscle relaxant.

Whether snoring itself is a health concern remains somewhat unclear. In the past decade, some studies have suggested a link between snoring and a higher risk of stroke, based on evidence that people who snore have thicker carotid arteries — a condition called atherosclerosis. But those studies cannot definitely say that snoring is to blame. And other studies have shown no increase in the risk of stroke from snoring.

Some people can snore all night long and wake up feeling great. For others, snoring can disrupt sleep — either by waking the snorer up, or by waking up a bed partner, who repeatedly pokes at the snorer through the night. Interrupted sleep can lead to daytime fatigue, diminished productivity and a risk of car accidents. Inadequate sleep has also been linked to chronic health consequences, such as diabetes and depression.

If you snore and you experience daytime sleepiness even after a full night's sleep, you may

have obstructive sleep apnea, which affects up to 7 percent of men and 5 percent of women in the United States, according to a 2008 study. A more recent study found that, if you include people without daytime sleepiness, rates jump to 24 percent of men and 9 percent of women.

Sleep apnea is like snoring to the extreme: The airway becomes so narrow during sleep that it completely closes off. An alarmed brain then causes a brief awakening. Someone with a severe case can wake up 60 or more times each hour. And during each arousal, Osorio says, the body responds with increased blood pressure and oxidative stress. Damage develops over time.

If untreated, studies show that moderate to severe sleep apnea increases the likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease. Sleep apnea may also increase the risk for cancers, diabetes and pregnancy complications, among other complications.

To learn whether you have sleep apnea, you need to do a sleep study that counts how many times you hold your breath throughout the night and how your oxygen levels drop when that happens. Normally, a sleep study happens in a sleep lab, but many people can do it at home.

The ideal way to treat sleep apnea is with a CPAP machine that uses air pressure to keep the airway open during sleep, Hsia says. But compliance tends to be low. For people who can't tolerate the machine, mouth guards that change the position of the tongue, jaw and other structures sometimes help. Surgery may also be an option.

Dealing with snoring in the absence of sleep apnea is more complicated, in part because causes differ among individuals, so solutions vary, too. And without definitive research to link snoring with health outcomes, Hsia says, insurance plans don't cover anti-snoring products.

If your snoring is caused by nasal congestion, on the other hand, it might take medication to control allergies or even surgery to fix a deviated septum.

For some people, losing weight below a particular threshold resolves snoring. Others benefit from a mouthguard, although over-the-counter versions tend to be one-size-fits-all, which makes them uncomfortable for most, Hsia says. If a cheap mouthguard works after a couple of nights, dentists can create custom versions that feel better.

It might take some trial and error to find the right solution. "It's a different thing for people to work for different people kind of a situation," Hsia says. "It is worth getting looked at because there's no one fix for every person."

WEEKEND: FAMILY

Parenting perspective

Caring for dying father taught writer to embrace monotony

By JESSICA MACHADO

Special to The Washington Post

As soon as my 3-year-old grabbed the Play-Doh, I knew what I was in for. “Roll this, Mommy,” he instructed, wanting me to make a smooth, thin carver for him to cut a circle out of. “How about we make a heart this time, or a giraffe?” I asked. “No, a circle,” he told me. I put my head down and got to work. We made circles again and again. We barely had a chance to appreciate our spread of purty polka dots before he mashed them all together and handed me the lump. “Here,” he said. “Roll this, Mommy.”

As I rolled, again, I thought about how many minutes needed to pass until my husband came home, until I went outside for a run, until I’d feel like an autonomous adult again. These are thoughts that have streamed in my mind essentially since I brought my son home from the hospital. Exchange Play-Doh for spending an hour putting him down for a nap, or bargaining bites of dinner with the promise of a “Wheels on the Bus” video. It was clear on Day One and Day 14 and Year 3½ that parenting wasn’t about feeding your intellect or your desire for pleasant spontaneity. It was about repetition. It was, in no small part, about embracing monotony.

Hooked on happiness

A colleague of mine brought up a good point the other day about how most of us are hooked on happiness — the euphoric, fleeting feeling you get when things happen to you, such as a raise or a free Beyoncé ticket — instead of seeking Marie Kondo-sanctioned joy, a warm sensation of fulfillment from within. I have historically made moves to spark happiness, not joy. I like working hard and then waiting for the reward just as much as I like anticipating a less-deserved fun night out; I even get a high from waiting for the given. You could say what has made the doldrums of the day-to-day bearable, at least up until motherhood, was my faith that Something Epic Could Be Just Around the Corner.

With parenthood, though, all of that is flipped upside down. The so-called big things that happen fall more into the joyous category: watching my baby toddle down the hallway for the first time, starting to crawl, or when she grabs my face and cackles. I can recognize this as joy; I can even bask in it. But these moments feel soft and gentle; they’re not the brand of heart-jumping excitement I am used to. I’m not well versed in how to hold onto them, either. Especially because they are often interrupted by whatever responsibility needs tending to next.

Joy, however great, also doesn’t scratch the itch of the ego-driven, circumstance-based high I know so well and don’t believe needs to be ignored. Of course, epic things can happen outside of my parenting life and identity. But I can’t fully separate them from parenting. Even



COMMENTARY

(Stock)

Even the happiest parent will likely agree that spending time with youngsters involves a lot of monotony.

when I am excited for a night out with friends, I am still aware I will be up at 11 in the morning, encouraging my son to pee, just a little, into the toilet. There is no more high while waiting for a high because I know that the gnawing routines of parenting are just around the other side of happiness.

At least, it all feels very limiting until something epic actually happens. Not in an exhilarating kind of way, but in a heart-shattering one. Then, suddenly, boredom feels like relief.

Full circle with father

My father had been living fairly gracefully with Parkinson’s and dementia for half a decade before he needed round-the-clock care last year. I wanted to be there for him, like he had been for me, so I flew out to see him in Hawaii as much as possible.

Over the course of a season, I went there four times to give my stepmother reprieve, to put my father in a nursing home, to say goodbye. I spoon-fed him blended cereal with heavy cream and guided him around the nursing facility. I put a catheter on him at night so he wouldn’t leak out of his diapers. I stared at his chest and his mouth as his breathing went from deep to shallow to gasps to stillness.

Losing a parent is gut-ripping regardless of the state of the relationship — this I already knew, having lost my mother when I was 25 — but to lose the last person who’d unconditionally move the moon for me was especially poignant.

My father was always the good-time dad. During the last window where he could travel, he surprised me with a helicopter ride over the Grand Canyon. Parkinson’s had already stripped him of much of the expression in his face, but I could feel him looking over to make sure I was enjoying myself. My father understood the value in happiness. It’s safe to say mine brought him joy.

Watching him slowly be unable to do things for others, and then himself, was one of the hardest

parts of witnessing his demise. But he still tried. As we walked around the nursing home one afternoon, it hit me that this might be one of the few times I had left with him, and I began to weep. He wobbled a bit, then caught himself, and put his arm around me. He held me up like he always had.

In this way, it was not hard to take care of my father because it was reciprocal. Also, having to care for a toddler had prepared me for scheduled feedings and impromptu walks to nowhere and providing comfort to someone who couldn’t express himself. It wasn’t that my mind didn’t wander, but being with him in these basic, life-maintaining ways seemed like the best thing I could do to fill the hole in my heart.

Boredom not so bad

When I’d walk through my apartment door upon returning from Hawaii, I’d let out a body-long exhale. Suddenly, the emotional stakes of caring for my son seemed much lighter. It was just me and him and my husband and the little life we had made together. Time was infinite, which was still daunting but more freeing than it had been.

One Saturday, my husband out on errands, I told my child to grab his coat. “We’re going to the playground!” he asked. No, I told him, let’s just walk. “Where are we going?” he asked multiple times as we made our way down the block. I don’t know, I said, before pointing at a squirrel on a neighbor’s lawn. We stepped forward to get a closer look. I thought about the moments with my father when nothing much happened, when time passed just watching TV or in car rides home from school, but I knew he was present. Suddenly, that what he would do in this moment.

“Wanna get a cookie?” I asked. “A cookie!” my son said, his eyes wide and bright. “A cookie, yes! A cookie, yes!” he said, jumping around in a circle.

It was only 10 a.m., but we were all overdue for a little bit of happiness.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Girls will be girls: Social aggression

Lilly was our easy child. As a baby, she sat contentedly on my hip while I did home therapy with her developmentally delayed older brother, or while I argued with her stronger-willed big sister. In school, Lilly made friends easily at every duty station. Her teachers would move Lilly’s desk away from her pals to stop her from chatting, but she would simply strike up new conversations with whomever sat nearby.

One afternoon when I was stationed in Germany, I raced out of our base apartment to our minivan, because I had forgotten to pick Lilly up from elementary school, and it was raining. Gunning the engine up a hill, I saw Lilly happily running alone down the sidewalk, arms outstretched and eyes closed, her backpack flopping. As fat raindrops splatted on her sweet face, she grinned from ear to ear.

That was Lilly.

Not surprisingly, she amassed a large group of girlfriends in high school, despite being the military kid on scholarship at a prestigious private school. I snapped copious photos of her fun-loving group dolled up for dances, so proud that Lilly’s easygoing personality had allowed her to breeze through the complex social quagmire of adolescence.

Lilly’s now a freshman in college, struggling with negative body image issues, low self-esteem and depression.

Not Lilly! How did this happen?

In an attempt to help, I am looking back at Lilly’s seemingly problem-free adolescence for answers. It turns out that her situation was not as simple as it seemed.

In today’s violent society, parents, educators and experts are talking openly about the potential dangers of bullying, aggressive male behavior up to “boys will be boys.” In the #MeToo era, girls are told they must band together to fight the real problem — male aggression. Few would suspect that girls might actually hurt each other, and subtle “mean girl” manipulations often go unnoticed until lasting psychological damage is done.

Although “relational aggression” has long been considered a form of bullying that can include “gossip, rumor spreading, public embarrassment, social exclusion and alliance building,” this behavior is sometimes accepted by parents and educators as a right of passage for girls. However, research indicates that this type of subtle bullying can lead to the development of low self-esteem, eating disorders, anxiety, depression and even suicide both the victims and the mean girls themselves.

Although Lilly was never angst from us to keep her “happy-go-lucky” reputation in our family, she has now admitted what was really going on in high school. Although she still fiercely defends her friend group, she admits there was a social ladder that she clung to precariously, with two particular girls consistently at the top. These “ringleaders” were often mean in subtle ways, using their admitted “high social” behavior to manipulate members of the group over minor conflicts. The ringleaders were intimidating enough that the other girls in the group did not stick up for each other, for fear that they might be the next victims of embarrassment or isolation.

Petty jealousy over a boy who had a crush on Lilly prompted one ringleader to scream at her to, “Get the f--- out of my room!” Even though the dozen other girls present later admitted that the ringleader’s behavior was completely unjustified, not one of them came to Lilly’s defense. She was excluded from the group for a week.

Also, comments made within the friend group about weight profoundly affected Lilly. On one occasion, Lilly’s friend held up a very large pair of pants she found in her room and said in front of the group, “Lilly, these are way too big for me, but it looks like they might be your size.” This and other weight-related comments were permanently burned into her fragile adolescent psyche.

Now, I grit my teeth. I should have asked more questions when I had the chance. But instead of seeing the insidious dangers under the surface, I obliviously snapped photos of those beautiful, glittering girls.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@googlemail.com

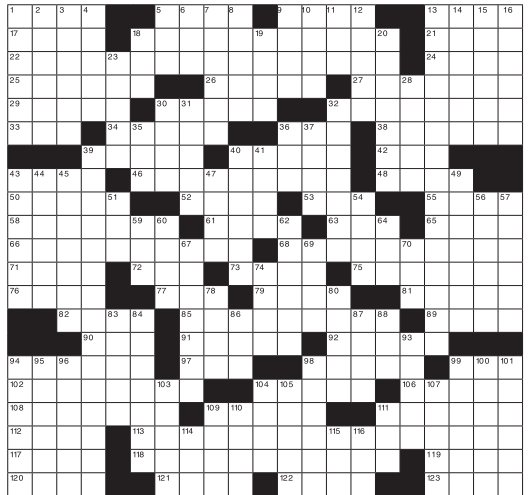
WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

TRIVIAL MATTERS BY DAVID KWONG / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

David Kwong is a professional magician and crossword constructor. He was the head magic consultant for the hit 2013 film "Now You See Me" (see the sly nod at 96-Down). He is currently performing in a one-man magic-and-puzzles show, "The Enigmatist," in New York City. Audience members must solve four puzzles in an intermission to get into the show. (Hints are available, if needed.) This is David's 19th puzzle for The Times. —W.S.

- ACROSS**
1 Not ruffled, as a bed
5 Slice, for example
9 Veal topper, informally
13 Cookie containers
17 "Yeah, right!"
18 Certain body of believers
21 Part of a Latin 101 conjugation
22 What kind of tree ____?
24 High-grade cotton
25 Capital that was home to the world's tallest building before the Burj Khalifa
26 Pears and apples
27 Vladimir Lenin's real last name
29 Nahuatl speaker
30 Answer to 22-Across [Science & Nature]
32 Multipurpose
33 Fixed
34 Polite
36 Moving vehicle
38 "Carmen" and "Elektra"
39 "Jeez!"
40 Mimicking
42 Director Anderson
43 Simulated
46 Answer to 113-Across [Geography]
- DOWN**
148 Answer to 13-Down [History]
50 First name on a famous plane
52 Farm females
53 Host for a destructive beetle
55 Abbr. on a label of brandy
58 Class skippers
61 Princess seduced by Zeus
63 Cartesian conclusion
65 Word said before "do"
66 What 1986 ____ romantic comedy got its title from a song by the Psychedelic Furs?
68 Who wrote a 2003 best seller about a ____?
71 Tres a cinco
72 "Little ol' me?"
73 Fine fabric
75 Asmara is its capital
76 Regard
77 World Cup cry
79 Newspaper units: Abbr.
81 Clammy
82 Answer to 68-Across [Art & Literature]
85 Answer to 66-Across [Entertainment]
89 "Phoey!"
90 Have a hawl
91 Amherst campus, for short
92 Cacophonous
94 Knight's wear, in England
- ACROSS**
97 Pad
98 Find a new tenant for
99 Calendar units: Abbr.
102 Select, as sides for a game
104 Answer to 30-Down [Sports & Leisure]
106 "To repeat ..."
108 Lens covers
109 Meerkat in "The Lion King"
111. iving, to Livy
112 Nose out
113 What ____ comes from a farm bird?
117 Blacken
118 Song heard at the start of "Saturday Night Fever"
119 Ride provider
120 Some I.R.S. data, for short
121 Not hush-hush
122 Kind
123 What a judge does for much of the day
- DOWN**
1 Some roadsters
2 Brightly lit
3 Clinton who once ran for president
4 Tour de France stage
5 "Pipe down!"
6 60 minuti
7 Get rid of
8 "When it comes to ..."
9 Scorer of 12 World Cup goals
- ACROSS**
10 Spanish ozo flavoring
11 Nutritional std.
12 Bump on a slope
13 Where were *battleships sunk in an 1894 ____*?
14 Key of Beethoven's "Für Elise"
15 Quimby of children's books
16 Lines on sheet music
18 CBS debut of 2000
19 Comic actor known for his shock humor
20 1966 Donovan hit with a rhyming title
23 "That tastes bleah!"
28 "Holy cow!"
30 Cole Porter's "Well, Did You ____?"
31 Jungle tangle
32 Sweet and kind
35 1962 hit for the Ikettes
36 Part of an itinerary
37 Cost to get a hand
39 What annual game have the ____ won more than any other team?
40 Too
41 Condition once called "shell shock," for short
43 Process
44 How chicken teriyaki is usually served
45 Gave reluctantly, with "up"
47 Court plea, in brief
- DOWN**
49 Oregon city that was the first permanent U.S. settlement west of the Rockies
51 A, B, C or D, in multiple choice: Abbr.
54 Foal's mother
56 Like Fenway among all major-league ballparks
57 Folds
59 Cinephile's channel
60 "Buzz off!"
62 Natty neckwear
64 Locale for Jacques Cousteau
67 Crankcase device
69 Like a moray
70 Director Burton
74 Follower of the Gospels
78 Wry Bombeck
80 Resilience
83 "It's a waste of time"
84 Loaves from whole-grain flour
86 Put away, in a way
87 Longtime Steelers coach Chuck
88 Small digit
93 Recked
94 Gain entry to
95 Kind of scholar
96 Freeman of "Now You See Me"
99 Hot stuff
100 Fate
101 Unwelcome looks
- ACROSS**
103 Be of ____ (aid)
104 Syracuse player, once
105 Sacha Baron Cohen character
107 Original edition of this puzzle's theme
109 Actor Diggs
110 Words of triumph
111 Whack
114 Length of a pool and back
115 Partner of tack
116 Suffix with elect



FACES



Jimmie Allen
Broken Bow Records

‘EXCITED and sad’

Jimmie Allen has mixed feelings about being the first black country singer to launch a career with a No. 1 hit

By EMILY YAHN
The Washington Post

Getting a No. 1 hit on country radio is a big deal, it's an especially rare feat when it's a singer's first-ever single. Yet that's exactly what happened to Jimmie Allen late last year when "Best Shot," a midtempo ballad about commitment to a relationship, went to the top of the chart.

For Allen, that also meant he made history: He became the first black artist ever to launch his career with a No. 1 single on country radio. (Darius Rucker kicked off his country career with a No. 1 in 2008, but he was already famous from *Hootie and the Blowfish*.) As Allen's team announced this fact and it got picked up in the media, Allen had mixed feelings about seeing the headlines.

"It was cool. But at the same time, I was sad about it," Allen, 32, said during a recent interview in Nashville. "Because it sucks that I'm the first. You know what I mean? I was excited and sad at the same time. I was glad I did it and it got done. But I want it to be where it's not a thing anymore."

"Hopefully a few years from now ... a black guy comes into country music, it's not 'the first black guy to do this.' It's just, 'Cool, you're another country artist,'" he said. While Allen listed inspirations and other talented artists of color in the genre — Rucker, Charley Pride, Kane Brown, Mickey Guyton, Tony Jackson, Aaron Vane, Tiera — it remains no secret that the country music world is overwhelmingly white. It was one of the many challenges Allen faced when he moved to Nashville almost 12 years ago with a nearly empty bank account and spent a stint sleeping in his car while dreaming of becoming a country singer.

Now, Allen is coming off a big breakout: He signed a record deal with Broken Bow Records in summer 2017 and, buoyed by the success of "Best Shot," released his debut album, "Mercury Lane," in October 2018. He toured extensively across the United States. Last week, he was anointed one of the five "New Faces of Country Music" at the Coun-

try Radio Seminar, a prestigious industry honor bestowed by radio programmers. This week, he was nominated for new male artist of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards.

As Allen tries to repeat his radio success with his second single, "Make Me Want To," released this month, he is thrilled, grateful and somewhat in disbelief at his career trajectory. His struggles taught him perspective.

When he embarked on a long radio tour to promote his music, some warned him the hours and travel would be grueling. He didn't mind. "Living in your car, being broke, being homeless, being hungry — I've seen grueling. Compared

‘Hopefully a few years from now ... a black guy comes into country music, it's not “the first black guy to do this.” It's just, “Cool, you're another country artist.”’

Jimmie Allen

to what I went through to live in Nashville, it wasn't grueling at all," he said. "People get up 6 a.m. and go to work. I get up at 6 a.m. and get to play songs. I wrote ... I always try to compare, because I feel like sometimes we can really lose focus on where we're at and how blessed we are."

A native of Milton, Del., Allen knew barely anyone when he moved to Music City in 2007. After growing up singing in church, playing the drums and listening to country radio with his dad, Nashville seemed like the natural place to go.

At first, it was rejection after rejection. When the trailer he was living in went on the market and he was forced to live his car, he still refused to move back to Delaware: He was certain that if he worked hard enough, things would fall into place.

"I really got to figure out how bad I wanted it," Allen said. "Struggle is what builds char-

acter, so it was cool to dive in. It helped me figure out who I was as a man as well as an artist."

He eventually caught a couple of breaks. First, a friend moved to town, and Allen saved enough money to split the rent on an apartment. Later, Allen performed at a songwriters event at a restaurant where a producer named Ash Bowers introduced himself. Bowers liked what he heard and wanted to know if Allen might be interested in working together.

The two have been collaborators ever since; Bowers became Allen's producer, publisher and manager. Although conventional wisdom says a new singer should start a career with a fun, up-tempo song, his label executives thought "Best Shot" would connect with listeners. They were correct.

"People were like, 'How far do you want to get it? Top 20? Top 10?' And I said, 'I want to get it to No. 1!'" Allen said. "Why would I want to settle for anything less than as high as it could go?"

Allen has a busy tour season ahead, opening for Kane Brown and, later, Rasco Flatts and Chris Young. He's also trying to capitalize on Oscar-season buzz with a cover of Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper's "Shallow," collaborating with new singer Abby Anderson. That record debuts Feb. 22.

Allen hopes his breakthrough can inspire other artists of color who are trying to make it in Nashville. He addressed this idea in the final track of his album "All Tractors Ain't Green," in which he sings, "It might go against the grain of that country boy motto / Sometimes what you get ain't always what you see / All fields ain't corn and all tractors ain't green."

"I remember growing up, people would say, 'You could be president! Well, for a black kid looking at that, it wasn't until Obama became president that you were like, 'Maybe it can really happen.'" Allen said. "I feel like the opposite side of that is whatever career you're chasing, no matter what it is — if you don't see anyone that looks like you, you should step up and be the representation so someone else can see it."

Paltrow: Skier tried to exploit my fame, wealth

From wire services

Gwyneth Paltrow said Wednesday in a court filing that a man who accused her in a lawsuit of crashing into him at a Utah ski resort was actually the culprit in the collision and is trying to exploit her celebrity and wealth.

Paltrow was skiing with her children and friends in 2016 during a family vacation on a beginner run at Deer Valley Resort in Park City, Utah, when Terry Sanderson smashed into her from behind and delivered a full



Paltrow

"body blow," the actress' attorney alleged in a counter claim. Paltrow said she was shaken by the collision and quit skiing for the day.

She said Sanderson apologized and said he was fine, her response to Sanderson's lawsuit said. Paltrow previously denied blame for the crash in a statement but had not offered a full version of the events.

Paltrow said her injuries were minor and that she is seeking "symbolic damages" of \$1 plus costs for her lawyers' fees.

In a lawsuit filed last month, Sanderson claimed that Paltrow was skiing out of control and knocked him out, leaving him with a concussion and four broken ribs. He is seeking \$3.1 million in damages.

Other news

■ **Actress Emma Thompson** is reportedly exiting an animated film because its studio hired John Lasseter. Thompson was set to record a voice for "Luck," a Skydance Animation movie scheduled for release in 2021. But she has left the project over "concerns about working with Lasseter," according to the Hollywood Reporter, which broke the news. Lasseter recently retired from Disney Pixar after the wake of a sexual harassment scandal.

■ **"Pike Logan"** novelist **Brad Taylor** has a three-book deal with a new publisher. William Morrow, a HarperCollins Publishers imprint, announced Thursday that it had signed the author for three installments of his million-selling thriller series. The first novel is scheduled for 2020. Taylor's books center on a character who is part of an elite counter-terrorism taskforce.

■ **Talk show host Wendy Williams** has set a date for her TV comeback. Williams, who announced in mid-January that she would be taking an "extended break" from "The Wendy Williams Show" to deal with complications from Graves' disease, is set to make her return on March 4.

■ **Actor Vinny Vella**, well-known for his turn in "Casino" and other popular gangster movies, has died following a battle with liver cancer. He was 72.

STARS AND STRIPES

OPINION

'America first' looks like America alone

Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher
Lt. Col. Sean Klrner, Europe commander
Lt. Col. Richard McClintic, Pacific commander
Harry Eley, Europe Business Operations

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor
leonard.terry@stripes.com
Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
reid.robert@stripes.com
Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com
Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erk Bink, Europe/Mideast
slavin.erk@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350, DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81.42.552.2511 ext. 88380, DSN (315)277.380

Washington

Joseph Caccioli, Washington Bureau Chief
caccioli.joseph@stripes.com
+1(202)886-0033
Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert Reismann, Mideast Circulation Manager
robert.r.w.reismann.na@gmail.com
na@stripes.com
DSN (314)583-9111

Europe

Erk Bink, Europe@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9111, DSN (314)583.9111

Pacific

Marl Mon, customerhelp@stripes.com
+81-3 6385.3171, DSN (315)229.3171

CONTACT US

Washington

tel +1(202) 886-0005
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050

Reader letters

letters@stripes.com

Additional contacts

stripes.com/contacts

OMBUSMAN

Tobias Naegele

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By DOYLE MCMANUS

Los Angeles Times

The annual Munich Security Conference is usually a somnolent affair, a ritual renewal of vows between the United States and its European allies. This year was different.

Germany's outgoing chancellor, Angela Merkel, finally said what she thinks of President Donald Trump. Without using Trump's name, she described his "America first" foreign policy as one of ignoring allies and promoting nationalism — and noted that Germany tried that before World War II with catastrophic results.

"Pieces of the classic, familiar order ... are falling apart," she said. "We cannot just smash it. We need to cooperate."

The best course, she said, is to "stick with multilateralism — which was the lesson of the Second World War."

The mostly European audience gave her a standing ovation. Ivanka Trump, who listened stone-faced, did not rise.

Merkel had specific complaints, too.

She said Trump was wrong to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran. She warned that Trump's plan to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria could "strengthen Iran's and Russia's hand." And she derided Trump's threat to impose import cars a national security threat, he could raise tariffs. "BMW's largest plant is in South Carolina," she pointed out.

For the first two years of Trump's presidency, Merkel tried to persuade him to accept the traditional pattern of U.S.-European relations: periodic disputes over trade, or military operations over there, soothing words about transatlantic friendship and mutual interests.

No longer. The postwar relationship, which kept the peace and brought prosperity to Europe through the Cold War

and in the decades since, is under threat from Washington. Alarms are ringing in Western Europe over Trump's unilateral, transactional foreign policy. And for good reason. The administration has taken direct aim at the European Union, a centerpiece of European statecraft since 1957.

If the EU collapses, some Europeans fear a new catastrophe: a fragmented Europe of feuding states, like the one that existed before World War II.

Europeans admit they helped create some of their problems. They haven't spent as much on defense as they promised; Trump is right about that. The EU also hasn't delivered its promise of prosperity to southern countries like Spain, Italy and Greece. The influx of millions of refugees and economic migrants has caused a populist backlash and helped elect authoritarian governments in Hungary and Poland.

But the Trump administration is making those challenges worse. In addition to questioning the need for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Trump has attacked the EU as a threat to U.S. interests. Asked last year who he believed caused authoritarianism, the first name on Trump's list — before Russia, China, North Korea or Iran — was the European Union.

"I think the European Union is a foe, what they do to us in trade," he said.

He has even charged that the EU was "backstabbing" and helped elect authoritarian governments, the first name on Trump's list — before Russia, China, North Korea or Iran — was the European Union.

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European diplomats charge privately that Trump's stance is mostly a strategy to gain the upper hand in trade negotiations. He'd rather negotiate one-on-one with small countries than allowing a large group of a peer competitor," one explained.

But the EU isn't only about trade. It wasn't founded to sabotage U.S. exports; it was founded to stop Germany and France from going to war again, as they did three

times between 1871 and 1945.

"The EU is the peacekeeping organization for Europe," a European official told me.

So when Trump and his aides waded into Europe's internal affairs and try to boost politicians who want to shatter the EU, that's not just a rough-and-tumble negotiating tactic. It's an existential threat to a project that European governments have been working on for more than 60 years.

"With friends like that, who needs enemies?" Donald Tusk, the Polish-born president of the European Council, tweeted last year.

Even as Trump works to undermine the EU, he's asking the Europeans to do more for him and his priorities. He has pressed them, without success, to also quit the Iran nuclear deal, although the deal is not part of the new U.S. sanctions. He wants them to send more troops to Syria, even though he's withdrawing U.S. forces. He wants Germany to cancel a long-standing contract for a natural gas pipeline from Russia and buy American gas instead.

It's clear what Trump wants: when the Europeans say an alliance ought to be a two-way street — administration officials have sometimes threatened retaliation through economic sanctions or tariffs. It's becoming a vicious cycle. The Trump administration pushes. The Europeans resist. The effect is a vicious cycle. That's why the EU is cooperating in areas where they mostly agree.

It looks like a marriage on the rocks — without a marriage counselor. Unless you count former Vice President Joe Biden, who went to the conference and advised the Europeans just to wait Trump out. Until then, the Europeans are stuck with the deal, producing an outcome the president insists he doesn't want: America alone.

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times and director of the journalism program at Georgetown University.

Government quashes drug makers' stunt on prices

By MICHAEL HILTZIK

Los Angeles Times

Most of the efforts out of Washington to fight rising drug prices amount to all-talk-no-action. But there's one government campaign that has worked — and that the government just expanded.

That is the pay-to-delay attack on so-called pay-to-delay schemes, in which the marketer of a brand-name drug pays off generic drug makers to keep their competing products off the shelves, sometimes for years. The Federal Trade Commission, which has scored a string of courtroom victories against pay-to-delay in recent years, estimates in 2010 that these deals were costing consumers \$3.5 billion a year. This week the agency announced that it has made its landmark case against a generics manufacturer even more airtight.

The manufacturer is Israel-based Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, the largest generic drug maker in the world. Teva settled the previous FTC lawsuit in 2015 for \$1.2 billion. But that deal left open a couple of loopholes — the "two most pernicious and common forms" of pay-to-delay, the FTC says. The settlement announced Tuesday shuts the door on those too.

Before we get into the details, here's the basic story: pay-to-delay. As we explained in 2013, these deals were spawned by the Hatch-Waxman Act of 1984, which was designed to encourage the development of cheap generic drugs to rival the patented brand-name versions.

Under the law, a company can seek to market a generic drug product before the patent on the original expires, typically by filing

a lawsuit challenging the existing patent as invalid. As an incentive, the law awards six months of exclusivity to the first generic maker to reach market, allowing it to fend off approval of competing generics by the Food and Drug Administration for that period.

The law effectively ended Big Pharma profits, since challengers won nearly three out of four patent challenges in court. The brand drug maker had to sue a large number of generic companies to keep away. The patent holders got months or years of comfy monopoly marketing, and the generics companies got money, a break on costly litigation, and sometimes the guarantee of a monopoly period for their own products.

Tea deals are sometimes called "reverse-pay" transactions, because they involve a patent holder paying an alleged infringer, rather than the other way around. Even big payments to generics companies can be worth the expense. That was made clear in 2006 by Frank Baldino, then the chief executive of Cephalon, the first FTC pay-to-delay case. Cephalon paid more than \$300 million to several generics companies to get them to drop patent challenges to its narcolepsy drug Provigil.

"We were able to get six more years of patent protection," Baldino crowed publicly. "That's \$4 billion in sales that no one expected. Cephalon didn't happen. It was acquired by Teva, which is why Teva settled the FTC case in 2015."

For a time the reverse-payment deals were smiled on by federal courts. The judges reasoned that if the delay fell within the period of exclusivity that the brand-name drugs' patents gave the owners, it was a matter of no-harm-no-foul.

That ended in 2013, when the Supreme Court ruled that pay-for-delay deals could violate antitrust law even under those circumstances. That decision, the deal typically were struck while the patent challenges were still in court and therefore could go either way. The generics makers, therefore, were kept out of the market by patent holders whose patents actually matured.

That brings us back to the FTC's latest settlement, which strengthens the restrictions on Teva originally reached in 2015. The settlement, FTC Chairman Joe Simons said in announcing the deal, "prevents the world's largest manufacturer of generic drugs from entering into exclusive agreements that prevent price competition by keeping generic drugs off the market."

For its part, Teva said it is "very pleased to pursue these litigations against the FTC behind us."

The original settlement had left in place two loopholes, the FTC said, since deals, in which a generics company strikes an apparently unrelated deal with a brand-name company at the same time it settles a patent lawsuit, obscuring the pay-to-delay aspect; and "no-authorized generic" commitments, in which the brand-name company agrees not to bring out a generic, or a generic version of a drug for some period.

The FTC says the new settlement will remain in place for 10 years. It also involves settlement of three other lawsuits against Teva or its subsidiaries in which the FTC alleged that Teva was paid off to delay generic versions of AndroGel, a testosterone replacement, and Lisdexamfetamine, a pain-relief patch for sufferers from shingles.

Michael Hiltzik is a Los Angeles Times columnist.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Factor in McCabe's baggage, but don't discount his insights
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Former acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe says Justice Department officials discussed invoking the 25th Amendment to suspend President Donald Trump's power early in his presidency. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a key Trump defender, has vowed to investigate, calling it an attempted "administrative coup."

That's a reckless allegation. The 25th Amendment is there to address presidential instability, something strongly suggested by Trump's behavior during his two years in office. The latest example came Sunday, when Trump opined on Twitter that he should "shoot" anyone who doesn't respond to a "Saturday Night Live" skit he didn't like.

If Graham wants to investigate these alleged 25th Amendment discussions, great — as long as those hearings also look at the mounting evidence that Trump may, in fact, be mentally unstable. In May 2017, Trump fired FBI Director James Comey over the agency's investigation of Russian meddling in the 2016 election (as Trump himself admitted on national television afterward). As McCabe said on "60 Minutes" on Sunday, Comey's firing made FBI officials consider for the first time whether the president might be compromised in some way.

McCabe says Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein raised the possibility of invoking the 25th Amendment, under which the vice president and Cabinet can suspend a president's authority if he is "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office" due to physical or mental incapacitation. Rosenstein, McCabe said, "was definitely very concerned about the president, about his capacity." As well he should have been. But the discussions apparently never went past the spit-balling stage.

McCabe was fired in March, hours before he was to retire with pension, ostensibly over a disputed allegation that he lied about press leaks. The move to deny McCabe his pension spotlighted Trump's well-known vindictiveness, but also makes it fair to examine McCabe's motives now in taking the story. As does the fact that he's currently marketing a book.

But none of that negates Trump's multiple, glaring signs of instability, including: his Twitter tantrums — like Sunday's "SNL" diatribe — against even the mildest criticism from any source; his disjointed speeches, like last week's Rose Garden laydown of immigration paranoia; his seeming inability to understand that the Russian government is not a source from which he should accept intelligence information that contradicts what U.S. intelligence professionals tell him.

So by all means, Graham should bring on the hearings — provided they address not just whether the 25th Amendment discussions happened but whether they were, perhaps, justified.

Correct gun law was in place, so why wasn't it enforced?
Chicago Tribune

Aurora, Ill., investigators determined immediately after last Friday's killings of five people at a manufacturing firm that the shooter had worked there for 15 years. They soon learned he had caused the carnage with a handgun purchased from a dealer in 2014. What's now under question,



TED S. WARREN/AP

Protesters rally at the Capitol in Olympia, Wash., this month to oppose a proposed bill that would remove parents' ability to claim a philosophical exemption to opt their school-age children out of the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine.

as five families grieve and wounded police officers speculate, why the killer still had a gun he shouldn't have possessed.

According to authorities, the man who fatally shot five employees of Henry Pratt Co. and wounded several officers Feb. 15 was a convicted felon. Gary Martin served time in prison in Mississippi in the 1990s for aggravated assault. Yet about a year later, he was issued an Illinois firearm owner's identification card and purchased a Smith & Wesson .40-caliber handgun.

Not everyone is allowed to have a FOID. A felony conviction is a disqualifier. Martin wasn't flagged until after his purchase, when he sought a concealed carry license. It appears that during the background check process, which included fingerprinting, his criminal record popped up. What happened next? Frustratingly, not enough. Martin's FOID was revoked, but he kept his firearm — later using it to cause a bloodbath in Aurora.

There are gun laws on the books designed to keep weapons away from dangerous people. Then there is enforcement. In this instance, there was a deadly lapse. Martin should never have received a FOID. Once that error was discovered, Illinois State Police apparently would have notified Martin by letter that he was not legally eligible to own a gun. Obviously, he either never got notification or ignored it. And no one took his gun away.

"Some disgruntled person walked in and had access to a firearm that he shouldn't have had access to," Aurora police Chief Kristen Ziman said Saturday. Did anyone from law enforcement try to track down Martin and confiscate his weapon? That's one of many "unanswered questions," Ziman said.

Police will continue their investigation, but there should be more work ahead for other officials. There needs to be a check, fast accounting of how Martin received a FOID. Also an explanation of why his gun wasn't taken from him and — after authorities learned of his felony record — whether he refused to relinquish the weapon.

It appears that Illinois law — or follow-through — is weak. Mark Jones, a senior policy adviser for the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence and a former federal law enforcement agent, told the Tribune over the weekend that state police typically don't act beyond sending a letter when a gun has been found to have a name on it. "They're not funded to do anything more than that," Jones said.

There's the starting point for Illinois after Aurora: an intensive examination of gun laws and enforcement practices to try to prevent another shooting of this type. Regulations and enforcement rules need to be tightened to give police the authority

and resources to track down people who may possess weapons they no longer are allowed to have.

After Aurora, state lawmakers and the law enforcement community should coalesce around a goal that ought to unify gun rights and gun control advocates: No gun owner should be stripped of a FOID card but able to keep a firearm.

Wide latitude on vaccination exemptions puts all at risk
USA Today

Measles outbreaks continue to lacerate communities from coast to coast, and there's absolutely no reason for it. The latest involves dozens of new cases in New York and in Clark County, Wash., across the Columbia River from Portland, Ore.

These shouldn't be happening. The highly contagious disease — which can lead to pneumonia and, in uncommon cases, to encephalitis or even death — was all but eradicated in 2000.

But many parents, embracing scientifically debunked fears about vaccination health risks, have declined the inoculation of their children with the doses for measles, mumps and rubella.

It surely doesn't help when public figures who should know better spread uninformed views. Darla Shine, wife of White House Communications Director Bill Shine, tweeted last week that childhood diseases "keep you healthy & fight cancer" and that "saddy," her children had received the inoculation. Actually, her kids are safer because they've had the vaccine.

The core issue is that too many states make it too easy for parents to avoid having their children immunized. While all 50 require vaccinations, 17 states allow parents to opt out for personal reasons.

Even if their offspring get and survive the illness, they selfishly place at serious risk other children who can't be vaccinated because of legitimate medical concerns such as a compromised immune system. Those children are protected only when virtually everyone else in the community is immunized, breaking the chain of infection.

Recent outbreaks underscore the risks of allowing nonmedical exemptions. Forty-seven states let parents opt out for religious reasons. Among them is New York, where there have been more than 70 cases of measles in New York City since October, including cases among unvaccinated children within an Orthodox Jewish community in Brooklyn. In Rockland County, there have been 135 cases since September.

The state of Washington allows both religious and personal exemptions. The result is that only 78 percent of children ages 6 to 18 in Clark County have received the necessary two doses of the inoculation. Almost

all of the 62 confirmed cases of measles in that county this year involved no prior immunization.

Three states — California, Mississippi and West Virginia — allow vaccination exemptions strictly for medical reasons. Not coincidentally, their two-dose inoculation rates for kindergartners are 96.9 percent, 99.4 percent and 98.4 percent, respectively.

The outbreak in Washington has prompted legislators to consider a measure sponsored by a Clark County Republican state representative that would deny vaccination exemptions based on personal beliefs.

For all the sense that makes, hard-core opposition remains fierce. Even as children ill, hurt and even dead numbers arrived at the Washington statehouse to voice opposition.

Despite the blowback, government requirements are the right things to do, along with public education campaigns. Exemptions to state-mandated vaccination should be granted only for a doctor-prescribed medical or religious reasons. The health of children is too important to put at risk.

Trump's right on Venezuela, but don't send US military
Miami Herald

While facing sharp criticism nationwide, including lawsuits from 16 states, for declaring a national emergency over money to build a border wall, President Donald Trump, of course, spent Presidents Day in friendly territory.

He came to Miami-Dade and a packed Florida International University arena to show support for Venezuelans, but also Cubans and Nicaraguans who support his administration's efforts to apply more political pressure to end the illegitimate regime of Nicolas Maduro and throw support to Juan Guaido, the American South American country's interim leader.

Trump found a warm reception in the city of refugees from dictatorships and political unrest — and rightly so. Trump deserves credit for being the only president since Ronald Reagan to take a hard stand against the American empire's Latin American region often forgotten by administrations.

But more important, Trump may have given the thousands gathered a preview of his re-election battle cry. Going after undocumented immigrants, as he touted as a 2016 campaign promise, is a perennial tactic for the president. So he now targets old-school socialism and communism.

"America will never be a socialist country," Trump preached to the choir, highlighting the troubles that have plagued Venezuela since it went down that road under late leader Hugo Chavez.

He also reminded Americans of America's past glories, much like Trump's State of the Union address where he made numerous mentions of World War II. But Monday, in the context of Venezuela, Trump spoke directly to Maduro and his military.

The Trump administration is hoping to step up international pressure on the dictator without the easy cash and way out of the millions of dollars in humanitarian aid from entering his country.

"You must not block this humanitarian aid," Trump said. "We seek a peaceful transition of power. But all options are open. If you choose this path, you will find no support, no easy exit and no way out. You'll lose everything."

Such talk attracted opposing demonstrators to FIU who demanded that the United States keep out of Venezuela and opposed any U.S. military action there.

The Editorial Board is in agreement with the military action. It is just the wrong, and deadly, action to take when Venezuelans themselves already are taking matters into their own hands — Guaido's takeover being the biggest first step. Trump, so far, has deftly navigated our involvement in Venezuela. He can continue to do so without the threat, or folly, of military intrusion.



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- People saying Free Dog (different breeds) for adoption.

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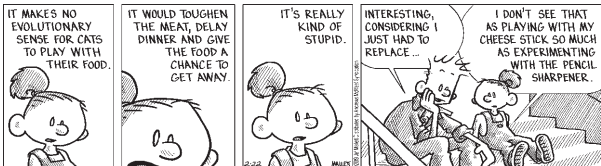
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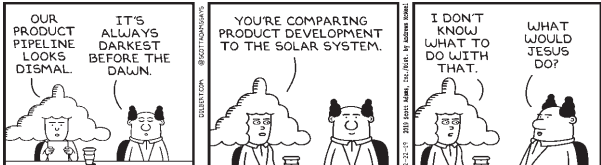
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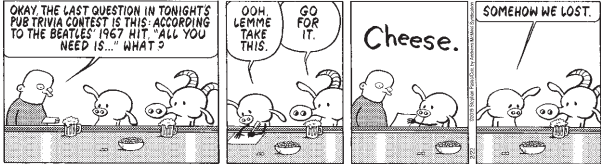
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



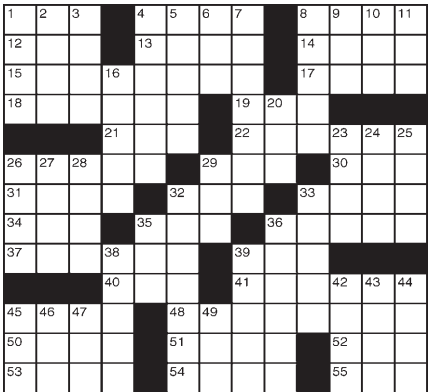
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

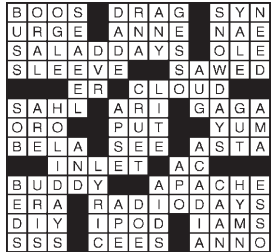
- 1 Up to 4 Platter
- 8 Scoop holder
- 12 Olympics chant
- 13 Sicilian resort
- 14 Dryer fuzz
- 15 Sandal type
- 17 Pub potables
- 18 Computer whiz
- 19 Dog tags, e.g.
- 21 PC key
- 22 Excellent
- 26 Expire
- 29 Present location?
- 30 Med. plan option
- 31 Perry's creator
- 32 — Aviv
- 33 Hotel worker
- 34 From — Z
- 35 "Science Guy" Bill
- 36 Segments
- 37 Kanye West's music
- 39 Moonshine vessel
- 40 Japanese sash
- 41 Narcotic
- 45 Volition
- 48 Sound of hoofbeats
- 50 Tom Joad, for one
- 51 First-rate
- 52 Onassis nickname
- 53 Marries

- 54 A deadly sin
- 55 Moment

DOWN

- 1 Clump of grass
- 2 Capri, e.g.
- 3 Secular
- 4 Sully
- 5 Cove
- 6 — Cat
- 7 Domed building in Washington D.C.
- 8 Purse fastener
- 9 Tin Man's need
- 10 SSW opposite
- 11 UFO crew
- 16 Stage
- 20 Ten, in Dijon
- 23 "— she blows!"
- 24 Skip
- 25 Spacecraft compartments
- 26 Wife of Jacob
- 27 Intro studio class
- 28 Fall into a soft chair
- 29 Spelldown
- 32 Not out of the ordinary
- 33 Wizzardy
- 35 San Francisco's — Hill
- 36 Thing on a string
- 38 Bagel features
- 39 Unites
- 42 Regrettably
- 43 Rent
- 44 Grand tale
- 45 Dazzle
- 46 White House nickname
- 47 Cover
- 49 Baseball's Gehrig

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-22

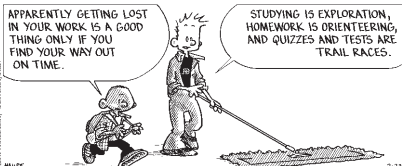
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XGF LSOWFX CW XGOX
YHC-KC KCSB GOI O LOSF
DPTUWVCYG-EFSSTU
OXB TYLGF PF CX UOY
THGFP-UTPSE.

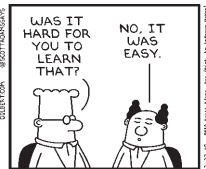
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHY WERE SOME POLICE OFFICERS ARRESTING A MAN WHO WAS PLAYING POOL? HE WAS PICKING POCKETS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals L

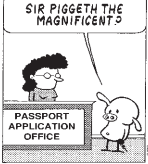
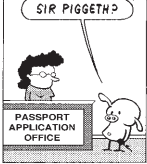
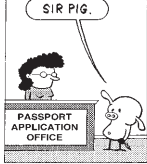
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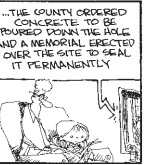
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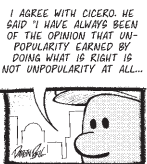
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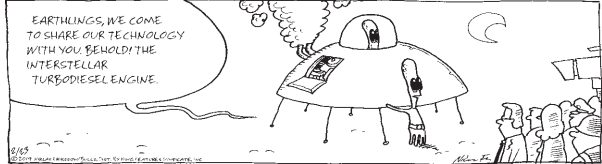
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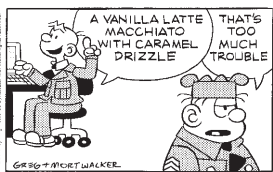
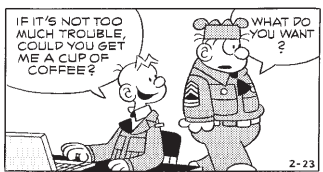
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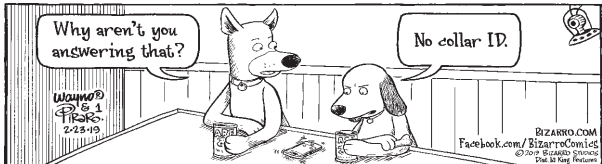
Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

	1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11
12							13					
14							15					
16						17	18				19	
			20	21				22	23			
24	25	26		27			28		29		30	31
32			33				34					
35						36				37		
			38		39		40			41		
42	43			44	45				46	47	48	49
50				51				52	53			
54								55				
56								57				

ACROSS

- 1 Paid (up)
- 6 Tennis star Graf
- 12 False
- 13 Sounded content
- 14 Warm, as leftovers
- 15 Not certain
- 16 Cruise stop
- 17 Farm unit
- 19 Garden of Food Network
- 20 Austen novel
- 22 Perched
- 24 Recede
- 27 Force
- 29 Pleasing
- 32 Symbolic first step toward getting hired
- 35 Cab
- 36 British noble
- 37 Eggy quaff
- 38 Existed
- 40 Squabble
- 42 Past
- 44 Furnace fuel
- 46 Volcanic flow
- 50 Cheered (for)
- 52 Ogled
- 54 Topical antiseptic
- 55 Builds
- 56 Strong points
- 57 "Midnight Cowboy" role

DOWN

- 1 Grieg's "— Death"
- 2 Actress Patricia
- 3 Private pupil
- 4 Sch. URL ender
- 5 "Feel-good" brain chemical
- 6 Incite
- 7 Jukebox picks
- 8 Hosp. areas
- 9 Fulfillment
- 10 Office plant
- 11 Notion
- 12 Greek consonant
- 18 Bach's "Coffee —"
- 21 1501, in Roman numerals
- 23 Moveover
- 24 Newt
- 25 Large snake
- 26 Ornamental garden trees
- 28 Best-selling Michael Jackson album
- 30 Bill's partner
- 31 Work unit
- 33 Spanish aunt
- 34 Sprite
- 39 Potpourri output
- 41 Swift
- 42 Met melody
- 43 Sticky substances
- 45 Praiseful pieces
- 47 Curved lines
- 48 Presidential power
- 49 TV spots
- 51 Dead heat
- 53 Epoch

Answer to Previous Puzzle

T	I	L	D	I	S	C	O	N	E
U	S	A	E	N	N	A	L	I	N
F	L	I	P	F	L	O	P	A	L
T	E	C	H	I	E	I	D	S	
			A	L	T		T	I	P
L	A	P	S	E	B	O	X	H	M
E	R	L	E	T	E	L	M	A	I
A	T	O	N	Y	E	P	A	R	T
H	I	P	H	O	P	J	U	G	
			O	B	I	O	P	I	A
W	I	L	L	C	L	I	P	C	L
O	K	I	E	A	O	N	E	A	R
W	E	D	S	L	U	S	T	S	E

2-23

CRYPTOQUIP

WFEVBFNWNJBK ZVLKQVKL
 HKQZKH ZV EMZOM LMK
 YQZDNQX LFYZO ZH LMK
 DQ. NDKQZON OFVLKHL: N
 JFWONHL.

Yesterday's Cryptquip: THE PLANET IN THAT SCI-FI FILM HAD A PALE BROWNISH-YELLOW ATMOSPHERE. IT WAS OCHER-WORLDLY.
 Today's Cryptquip Clue: L equals T

NHL

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference										
Atlantic Division										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA			
Tampa Bay	61	36	11	4	96	242	162			
Boston	61	36	17	8	80	184	157			
Toronto	59	36	19	4	76	208	167			
Montreal	60	32	21	7	71	179	176			
Buffalo	59	36	24	7	63	170	185			
Florida	58	26	24	8	60	181	199			
Detroit	61	23	29	9	55	172	204			
Ottawa	59	22	32	5	49	186	216			
Metropolitan Division										
N.Y. Islanders	59	35	18	6	76	171	142			
Washington	60	33	20	7	73	202	191			
Pittsburgh	60	32	21	7	71	210	187			
Columbus	59	33	23	7	69	189	180			
Carolina	60	31	23	6	68	174	167			
Philadelphia	60	28	25	8	63	179	201			
N.Y. Rangers	59	26	25	8	60	172	195			
New Jersey	60	23	29	8	54	176	208			

Western Conference						
Central Division						
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Winnipeg	60	36	20	4	76	203/178
Nashville	62	36	22	5	75	191/163
St. Louis	59	32	22	5	69	177/164
Dallas	59	29	25	5	63	148/154
Colorado	60	25	24	11	61	186/193
Chicago	61	26	26	9	61	205/227
Minnesota	60	27	27	6	60	164/180
Pacific Division						
Calgary	60	37	16	7	81	221/178
San Jose	60	37	17	8	78	219/190
Vegas	62	32	25	5	69	182/175
Arizona	60	27	28	5	59	157/174
Vancouver	60	26	27	7	59	170/188
Anaheim	60	24	27	9	57	137/187
Edmonton	59	24	29	6	54	165/198
Los Angeles	59	23	27	6	52	143/182

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Saturday's games

Florida 4, Buffalo 2
Tampa Bay 5, Philadelphia 2
Pittsburgh 4, New Jersey 3
N.Y. Rangers 2, Carolina 1
Montreal 3, Columbus 2
St. Louis 3, Toronto 2, OT
Nashville 4, Minnesota 0
Nashville 5, Dallas 3
Arizona 3, Edmonton 2, SO

Wednesday's games

Chicago 5, Detroit 4, OT
Colorado 4, Winnipeg 3
Calgary 4, N.Y. Islanders 2
Boston 3, Tampa Bay 2

Thursday's games

Washington at Toronto
Ottawa at Philadelphia
San Jose at Florida
Minnesota at N.Y. Rangers
Buffalo at Tampa Bay
Philadelphia at Montreal
Los Angeles at Nashville
St. Louis at Vancouver
N.Y. Islanders at Edmonton

Friday's games

Columbus at Ottawa
Minnesota at Detroit
Colorado at Chicago
Anaheim at Calgary
Winnipeg at Vegas

Saturday's games

New Jersey at N.Y. Rangers
Washington at Buffalo
Boston at St. Louis
Carolina at Dallas
San Jose at Florida
Colorado at Nashville
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia
N.Y. Islanders at Vancouver
Anaheim at Edmonton

Sunday's games

N.Y. Rangers at Washington
Detroit at Chicago
San Jose at Minnesota
St. Louis at Nashville
Winnipeg at Arizona

Leaders

Goal scoring
Name, Team GP G
Alex Ovechkin, Washington 56 42
Patrick Kane, Chicago 56 38
Sebastian Aho, Carolina 56 31
Leon Draisaitl, Edmonton 59 35
Brayden Point, Tampa Bay 59 35
Steven Stamkos, Tampa Bay 61 33
John Tavares, New York 60 30
Cam Atkinson, Columbus 57 32
Sean Couturier, Philadelphia 57 32
Gabriel Landeskog, Colorado 57 31
Connor McDavid, Edmonton 57 31
Johnny Gaudreau, Calgary 56 31
Nathan MacKinnon, Colorado 56 30
Mark Scheifele, Winnipeg 60 30
Nikita Kucherov, Tampa Bay 61 29

Plus/Minus

Name, Team GP +/-
Alex Ovechkin, Washington 56 29
Mark Giordano, Calgary 58 29
Ryan O'Reilly, Colorado 56 28
Ryan McDonagh, Tampa Bay 58 28
Nathan MacKinnon, Colorado 56 28
Ron Hainsey, Toronto 59 26
Nick Bonino, Nashville 61 25
Ryan O'Reilly, St. Louis 59 25
T.J. Brodie, Carolina 59 24
Cody Ceci, Nashville 59 24
Colton Cissikas, N.Y. Islanders 52 22
Morgan Rielly, Toronto 59 22
Casey Cizikas, Nashville 55 22
Teuvo Teravainen, Carolina 60 22
Ryan Ellis, Nashville 62 20
Michael Kempny, Washington 57 20

Around the league

Players brace for possible moves

Teams eye postseason as trade deadline nears

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

Thomas Vanek remembers waking up in Edmonton, Alberta, and turning on the TV in his hotel room to find out where he was heading.

It was March 5, 2014, the NHL's trade deadline day, and Vanek's bags were packed. He knew he had played his final game a few days earlier for the New York Islanders after rejecting the team's bid to sign the pending free agent to a contract extension.

It wasn't until the deadline passed when Vanek's phone started ringing. It wasn't his agent, the Islanders or some other team's general manager.

"I got a message from a reporter saying, 'The Montreal media wants to talk to you,'" said Vanek, recalling how he found out he'd been traded to the Canadiens. "That was probably the hardest one because it was my first trade deadline deal."

It wouldn't be his last.

'If something comes up that makes complete sense, then we'll take a look at it.'

Thomas Vanek

Detroit forward on waiving his no-trade clause

clashes a no-trade clause with Detroit forward on waiving his no-trade clause

"There's a reason I came back to Detroit — because I like it here," he said. "But at the same time, who knows what's going to happen? Kenny's always talking. So if something comes up that makes complete sense, then we'll take a look at it."

The trading has already begun, with the most notable featuring Toronto's acquisition of defenseman Jake Muzzin in a deal with Los Angeles on Jan. 28.

Otherwise, the trade market remains bottled up with more prospective buyers than sellers. Of the 31 teams, 24 are either in contention or within six points of their conference's eighth and final playoff spot entering play Thursday.

Among the more notable players considered on the market are forwards Artemi Panarin (Columbus), Derrick Brassard (Florida), Gustav Nyquist (Detroit), the New York Rangers' Kevin Hayes and Mats Zuccarello, and Columbus goalie Sergei Bobrovsky. And then there's the Ottawa Senators, who are attempting to determine the trade status of forwards Matt Duchene, Mark Stone and Ryan Dzingel, all of whom are eligible to become free agents this summer.

Last year's deadline featured 18 trades involving 37 players, including the Sabres dealing Evander Kane to San Jose, St. Louis sending Pat Stastny to Winnipeg and the Rangers moving Ryan McDonagh and J.T. Miller to Tampa Bay.

Few of the deals made an impact on their teams' respective playoff runs. The Lightning reached the Eastern Conference finals, but they were defeated by the eventual Stanley



JEFFREY T. BARNES/AP

Detroit Red Wings forward Thomas Vanek has been dealt three times at the trade deadline. Now in his second stint with the Red Wings, he may be on the move yet again.

Cup champion Washington Capitals, whose most notable late-season addition was defenseman Michal Kempny (acquired in a trade with Chicago a week before the deadline).

The expansion Vegas Golden Knights reached the Stanley Cup Final despite getting limited production from trade-deadline addition Tomas Tatar. San Jose made it to the second round before being eliminated, but resigned Kane.

None of the deals came close to matching what's considered the NHL's gold standard on March 10, 1980. That's when the Islanders acquired Bruce Goring from Los Angeles to spark what became New York's run of winning four consecutive championships. Goring wasn't happy about the deal that also sent forward Billy Harris and defenseman Dave Lewis to the Kings.

"It was very upsetting because I was on the second year of a six-year contract and had made a commitment to basically spend my entire career in L.A.," Goring recalled.

It didn't take long to get over the shock for the then-30-year-old, who had scored 20 or more goals nine times during his 10-plus seasons with the Kings.

With Goring, the Islanders closed the season 8-0-4 and lost just six times in the playoffs in winning the Final in six games over Philadelphia. The following year, Goring was named the playoff MVP.

He called the acquisition joining a star-packed Islanders team as less intimidating than it might have been as a younger player.

"I came into that dressing room and I didn't have anything to prove. I had a pretty strong reputation about who I was and what I couldn't do," Goring said. "I wasn't taking Bryan Trottier's job. I was there to be who I was."

Now an Islanders broadcaster, Goring refers to the trade as the "icing on the cake" of his career.

"Nobody knew much about Butch Goring, as I played all those years in L.A. There was no exposure," he said. "And now everyone remembers who you are. The great thing about the trade deadline is everybody talks about Butch Goring."

Deadline day

Vanek wondered if the deadline falls too late in the season for players to become comfortable with their new surroundings.

"The only thing you can control is being a good person, being a good teammate," he said. "But at the same time, the team that gets you, they want you to be productive. And that's the hard part."

Goring doesn't think so, noting the trade deadline used to be 26 days before the end of the season and now is 40.

"If you're going to acquire a player that's going to be a difference maker, he's going to adapt in a hurry," Goring said.

Red Wings GM Holland backs the current deadline.

"For those teams that are buyers, you still have 20 games to get that player acclimated to your system. For the teams that aren't sure if they're buyers or sellers, it gives them more time," Holland said.

Planes, ubers and flat tires

Ryan Hartman won't soon forget what happened when traded by Chicago to Nashville at the season's deadline.

With a stopover in Toronto, it took him 8 hours to fly from Chicago to Winnipeg, where he joined the Predators. And that was after beginning the day contending with a flat tire. He used Uber to get to the Blackhawks' practice and then had to use it again — this time with all his equipment — to return home and pack before heading to the airport.

"I had an issue with it all year and someone told me at the beginning of the year, 'You're going to end up getting a flat tire at the worst time possible,'" Hartman said. "Sure enough."

Game of the week

The Colorado Avalanche visits the Chicago Blackhawks on Friday in a game between two Western Conference wild-card contenders.

AP Hockey Writers Larry Lage and Stephen Whyno and AP Sports Writer Teresa M. Walker contributed to this story.

NBA



MICHAEL Dwyer/AP

Kyrie Irving, left, tries to get past the Thunder's Russell Westbrook on Feb. 3. Irving was expected to be back in the starting lineup on Thursday when Boston returned from the All-Star break. He missed two games before the break with a strained right knee.

Putting it together

Celtics hoping to carry their recent momentum into stretch run of season

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
Associated Press

ONE way or another, the spotlight was always going to shine on the Boston Celtics in an Eastern Conference without LeBron James.

After back-to-back losses to Kansas' Cavaliers in the past two conference finals, his departure to join the Los Angeles Lakers seemed to clear the path for Boston to take the reins in the East.

That hasn't happened — yet. Instead of solidifying themselves as the NBA champion Golden State Warriors' chief challenger, the Celtics come out of the All-Star break still with much to figure out — and trailing Milwaukee and Toronto in the East standings.

"We realize that we've played well in the last month and a half," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "Although there have been multiple days when I'm sure it hasn't felt like it."

Beginning with a win over Toronto on Jan. 16, Boston won 12 of its final 15 games before the break. It also included wins over five other teams currently in position to make the playoffs. But Boston also blew an 18-point lead in a last-second loss to the Lakers and a 28-point lead two days later in a loss to the Clippers.

The Celtics recovered to post close wins at Philadelphia and at home against Detroit in their final game before the break. And they did it without Kyrie Irving,



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Jayson Tatum is scoring more points in this second season, but both his field-goal and three-point percentages dropped.

who missed both games with a strained right knee.

Irving was able to play 25 minutes in the All-Star Game and was expected to be back in the starting lineup Thursday when Boston played at Milwaukee. That matchup is the start of a three-game road trip that includes a visit to Toronto.

The Celtics will need a healthy Irving; both the Bucks and Raptors made improvements at the trade deadline.

Milwaukee picked up big man Nikola Mirotic in a deal with the Pelicans. The Raptors added Marc Gasol from Memphis in exchange for center Jonas Valanciunas. Stevens said the assumption is that both teams "would only benefit from those moves."

Much of the buzz around Bos-

ton at the deadline centered on whether Anthony Davis would still be around this summer for the Celtics and other teams to potentially make deals for him.

For now, Boston remains focused on trying to find cohesion and consistency on a roster that has an All-Star in Irving, former All-Stars in Gordon Hayward and Al Horford and tons of young talent led by Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown.

Tatum and Brown carried the team with Hayward out for the year and Irving missing most of the second half with a knee issue. Stevens knew making the group gel with everyone healthy would be a challenge and it has.

Hayward has gone from a starter to coming off the bench as he continues to try to rediscover his timing after missing all but one game last year following his devastating ankle injury. He's started just 17 games this season, his average is down to 11.2 points per game and he is shooting just 44 percent from the field.

Tatum is scoring more points in his second season (16.5 ppg, up from 13.9), but has seen his field-goal percentage drop from 48 down to 45 and his three-point percentage drop from 43 to 38 percent. Brown has played well lately but is still adjusting to his role off the bench.

Meanwhile, Irving has remained steady, averaging 24 points and seven assists per game, earning his sixth All-Star nod. He is the only player in the NBA this season averaging 23 points and

six assists, while also shooting 40 percent from beyond the arc.

The Celtics also remain a top-five defensive team, one of their hallmarks under Stevens.

Still, questions continue to follow a team that at 37-21 is already approaching its total number of losses from a year ago (55-27).

Irving was critical of the Celtics' younger players during a three-game losing streak in January, saying in part, "the young guys don't know what it takes to be a championship-level team." He later apologized after Brown took issue with the comments.

The public bickering prompted some league watchers to wonder whether the team — 9-2 without Irving this season — was somehow better without him in the lineup.

It's a notion that Celtics president of basketball operations Danny Ainge dismissed outright during a recent appearance on Boston's 98.5 The Sports Hub.

"It's completely illogical," Ainge said. "Kyrie is by far our most efficient offensive player, without question."

Those comments were echoed by Stevens.

"We need Kyrie to be the best version of ourselves," he said. Celtics guard Marcus Smart said their struggles will serve them going forward.

"We're still fighters, man," Smart said. "We've been hit with a lot of adversity. But we keep finding ways to overcome it and we keep finding ways to come out with victories. And we keep fighting with what we have."

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	43	16	72%	—
Boston	37	21	63%	5½
Philadelphia	38	20	65%	4½
Brooklyn	30	29	50%	13
New York	11	47	19%	31½

Southeast Division

Charlotte	27	30	47%	—
Miami	26	30	46%	½
Orlando	27	32	45%	1
Washington	24	34	41%	3½
Atlanta	19	39	32%	8½

Central Division

Milwaukee	43	16	75%	—
Indiana	38	20	65%	5½
Detroit	36	20	64%	1½
Chicago	14	44	24%	29½
Cleveland	12	46	20%	31½

Western Conference

Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	33	24	57%	—
San Antonio	33	26	55%	1
Dallas	29	31	48%	7½
New Orleans	26	33	44%	8
Memphis	23	36	39%	11

Northwest Division

Denver	39	18	68%	—
Oklahoma City	37	20	64%	2
Portland	32	25	56%	7
Utah	25	32	43%	11
Minnesota	27	30	47%	12

Pacific Division

Golden State	41	16	71%	—
L.A. Clippers	32	27	54%	10
Sacramento	30	27	52%	11
L.A. Lakers	28	29	49%	13
Phoenix	11	48	18%	31

No games scheduled

Tuesday's games

Wednesday's games

Thursday's games

Friday's games

Saturday's games

Sunday's games

Monday's games

Tuesday's games

Wednesday's games

Thursday's games

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Saturday's games

Sunday's games

NBA

Break over: Playoff push starts now

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

MIAMI — Golden State is still the favorite for a fourth title in five years.

Milwaukee, Toronto, Indiana, Boston, Philadelphia, Oklahoma City and Denver can all go ahead and cancel those mid-April vacation plans if they were foolish enough to have made them in the first place.

For LeBron James and Dwyane Wade, some work awaits.

The All-Star break ended Thursday, with about one-third of the season remaining for most clubs — and that means the playoff push now gets very serious. Nobody has officially clinched a spot yet, though it would take a highly improbable series of events for the current top teams in the Eastern and Western conferences to miss the postseason.

"Every year is a new challenge, different circumstances," Golden State guard Stephen Curry said. "We are

motivated. We understand what's at stake."

James has been to the NBA Finals in each of the last eight seasons, all out of the East — four with Miami, four with Cleveland. His Los Angeles Lakers currently are 10th in the West, three games behind the Clippers for the final playoff berth.

James has been to the playoffs in 13 consecutive seasons.

"I hope that, first off, we all get healthy," Lakers President Magic Johnson said. "This has been one of the worst seasons I've ever been around Laker basketball as far as injuries are concerned. When we were healthy, we were in fourth place. Now we're like 10th place. But when you've got LeBron James, anything is possible."

The Miami Heat are part of a six-team, three-spot race in the East, and Wade is hoping for one last postseason trip out of his 16th and final season. Heat President Pat Riley said he thinks the way the Heat ended their pre-All-Star schedule — with a

2-3 road trip, though one where Miami could have won four of the games — is a good sign.

"It looks as though there's something happening here," Riley said.

Sacramento is right in the race to end the NBA's longest current playoff drought, the Kings haven't been to the postseason since 2006. Phoenix's drought will hit nine straight seasons, but Orlando — current holder of the third-longest drought at six seasons — hit the break with a five-game winning streak and is in the East mix.

"I think we feel good about ourselves," Magic All-Star forward Nikola Vucevic said. "I know we have good confidence."

Here are some other things to know down the stretch:

Scoring and pace

Unless every team drastically changes the way it plays over the next two months — which won't happen — the league will finish this season with its highest-scoring average and fastest pace in 30 years.

Teams are averaging 110.7 points and 100 possessions per game this season. That's the best scoring number since 1984-85 (110.8 points per game) and fastest pace since 1988-89 (100.6 possessions per game).

All 30 teams are on pace to average at least 100 points per game this season. The last time every team in the league averaged 100 was 1986-87, when the NBA had 23 franchises.

Threes are wild

The NBA is on pace to see records in three-pointers made and three-pointers attempted.

If that sounds like an annual statement, it is: This will be the seventh straight season where both marks fall.

Houston's James Harden has a shot at the record for threes in a single season. He has 274 (which would be fifth-best for a season already), put-

ting him on pace for 401 if he plays in all 25 of the Rockets' remaining games. Golden State's Stephen Curry holds the mark, hitting 402 from deep in 2015-16.

Harden seems like a lock for the three-taken record — Curry took 886 in his record-setting year, Harden has 733 now and is on pace for 1,072.

More Harden

The Houston All-Star is in the throes of a historic offensive season.

Harden's current scoring average — 36.6 points per game — would be eighth-best all-time, and the best mark since Michael Jordan averaged 37.1 points in 1986-87. Jordan (once), Elgin Baylor (once) and Wilt Chamberlain (five times) are the only players to finish a season with a higher average than Harden's now.

Harden leads Oklahoma City's Paul George by 7.9 points per game in this year's scoring race. That is an enormous number. To put that in perspective: If George stays at his current scoring rate, 28.7 per game, Harden would remain the NBA's scoring leader even if he went scoreless in each of his next 14 games.

Good Bucks

Already with 43 wins this season, it's already safe to say this is the best year for Milwaukee in a long time.

The Bucks won 44 games last season, and 46 in 2009-10. This will almost certainly be Milwaukee's first 50-win year since 2000-01 (52-30), and the Bucks could flirt with their first 60-win year since 1980-81. Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer says he joined Milwaukee at the perfect time.

"The fans there, the energy in our arena, it's off the charts," Budenholzer said. "New practice facility, a roster that's in a great place, ownership, front office — everything is just really, really set up to have great success."



ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH/AP

Rockets guard James Harden has a shot at the record for threes in a single season. He has 274 (which would be fifth-best for a season already), putting him on pace for 401. Golden State's Stephen Curry holds the mark with 402.

Bad Knicks

David Fizdale, the very likable and highly respected first-year Knicks coach is overseeing a team that's on pace for 16 wins — which would be the worst record in franchise history. Obviously, it's all about the draft and free agency for the Knicks, who are in position to be major players when the NBA's annual superstar-shopping window opens on July 1.

Phoenix is also on pace to have its worst season ever. Chicago and Cleveland probably won't hit all-time rock bottom, but look like they'll come close. In all, four teams will likely finish the season with a winning percentage under .250 — the most since six teams were that bad in the 1997-98 season.

The draft lottery is May 14, and that's when the Knicks, Suns, Bulls and Cavaliers could decide this season's suffering worthwhile.



SETH WENIG/AP

The Knicks acquired Dennis Smith Jr., center, before the All-Star break in the deal that sent star Kristaps Porzingis to the Mavericks. The Knicks are on pace for just 16 wins this season.



Lakers forward
LeBron James
Mark J. Ter III/AP

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

D-II boys semis set by tiebreakers

By Aaron Knowles
and Gregory Broome
Stars and Stripes

WIESBADEN, Germany — The Division II field was the murkiest entering the DODEA Europe boys basketball championships. And that didn't really change Thursday.

Four of the top five seeds in the large-school field advanced into Friday's semifinal led by unbeaten and four-time defending champion Ramstein. Top seeded Ansbach and three of the next four seeded teams moved on in Division III.

It took a tiebreaker system to determine two D-II teams to move on, though, after Marymount, Rota and Aviano ended up at 2-1 in Pool A. Point differential in the three schools involving the three seeded sent the top-ranked Admirals and seventh-ranked Royals into the next round.

The result of two days of play are six semifinal matchups Friday: Ramstein takes on Wiesbaden, and Kaiserslautern plays Stuttgart in D-I. Rota meets Black Forest Academy and Marymount plays Bahrain in D-II and Ansbach faces Spangdahlem and Baumholder meets Brussels in D-III.

Division I

Kaiserslautern 42, Wiesbaden 39: Both teams had already clinched spots in Friday's semifinal. This game would determine which one grabbed the top seed, and avoided unbeaten Ramstein in Friday's semifinals.

Kaiserslautern was strong underneath and therefore shut down



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

After getting past Wiesbaden's Markez Middlebrooks, Kaiserslautern's Trevorious Dotson shoots over Roberto Eiseman in a Division I game. Kaiserslautern won 41-39.

Wiesbaden's speedsters and their chances for fast-break points.

At the half, Kaiserslautern led 21-15.

Wiesbaden attacked inside more aggressively in the second half to get back into the game and the lead bounced back and forth until the end.

In the last 11.9 seconds of the game, it was a nail-biting end as the Wiesbaden fought to get the ball to score to tie or win the game, and Kaiserslautern struggled to keep the ball until the clock ran out.

Kaiserslautern succeeded in stopping Wiesbaden from getting the points they needed and barely secured the victory.

"We survived," Raiders coach Corey Sullivan said. "Wiesbaden is a great team. They are always good. I am glad my kids gutted it

out and I am real proud of them. They played like a team tonight and that is what won."

If am going to get my kids on the bus, take them home and put them to sleep," Sullivan said. "And that is how we are going to prepare for tomorrow."

Ramstein 38, Stuttgart 20: Both teams from Pool A had already clinched with a pair of victories on Wednesday. So they determined bragging rights and seeding when they played each other.

Naser Eaves attacked the basket early and often.

"As a team, we were just one," Eaves said. "In the beginning of the season, we weren't really talking much defensively, or as a team. Our coach told us that if we communicated better, things would open more and it worked. It

allowed us to know exactly where we were at on the court."

During the second quarter the Royals began to pull ahead. At one point, Eaves delivered a massive slam dunk during a solo fast break. That helped Ramstein build an 18-7 lead at halftime. The Royals expanded it gradually in the second half.

Division II

Rota 45, AFNORTH 20: The second-seeded Admirals pointed themselves towards the semifinals after a thorough defeat of the sixth-seeded Lions.

Underdog AFNORTH stayed close throughout the first half and trailed by just four points at halftime. That kept the pressure on the Admirals, who had already fought off another hungry loser seed in a 44-42 defeat of No. 7 Marymount on Wednesday.

"We have to come out here wanting to win, you know," Rota senior Antonio White said. "It's no easy games. We have to come out here giving it our all."

The Admirals did just that as they righted their ship after half-time. White scored 16 of his 21 points in the second half while creating open looks for willing and able teammates on the perimeter.

"I drove to the basket, kicked to them a couple of times and we got some momentum going," White said.

That momentum was briefly halted late Thursday as Aviano earned a 32-27 defeat over the Admirals, creating a three-way tie for the pool's two semifinal berths.

Scoreboard

DODEA Europe Championships
Thursday in Wiesbaden, Germany

Boys

Division I

Pool A

Pool B

Friday's semifinals

At Clay Kasernen Fitness Center

Division II

Pool A

Pool B

Friday's semifinals

At Wiesbaden High School

Girls

Pool A

Pool B

Friday's semifinals

At Wiesbaden High School

Division III

Pool A

Pool B

Friday's semifinals

At Clay Kasernen Fitness Center

Division III

Pool A

Pool B

Friday's semifinals

At Wiesbaden High School

Spangdahlem vs. Brussels, 10 a.m.

Signella vs. Ansbach, 11:30 a.m.

Spangdahlem 31, Hohenfels 19

Spangdahlem 32, Baumholder 14

At Wiesbaden High School

Spangdahlem vs. Brussels, 10 a.m.

Signella vs. Ansbach, 11:30 a.m.

Top-seeded girls dominate way to semis

By Aaron Knowles
and Gregory Broome
Stars and Stripes

WIESBADEN, Germany — Those looking for big surprises were in for disappointment on the second day of the DODEA Europe girls basketball championships.

The top four seeds in Division I advanced to Friday's semifinals. And four of the top five teams in Division II and Division III moved on.

Division I

Royals win twice: Ramstein faced off against SHAPE during its first game of the day, and then against Kaiserslautern.

The Spartans, needing a victory to have any chance of reaching the semifinals, started off strongly.

That seemed to shake Ramstein and Alexis Tri started piling up points. She scored eight points as the Royals surged ahead.

"The game felt kind of dead at first, but once we started moving and getting our shots in, we really picked ourselves up and the pace," Tri said. "At first, we didn't even understand what defense SHAPE was running, so we had to adjust our offense to that when we figured it out."

Ramstein expanded its lead as the game went on, clinching a spot in Friday's

semifinals.

In their next game against Kaiserslautern — a 33-24 victory — the Royals were not able to really pin down a strong lead until the third quarter.

The win earned Ramstein Pool B's top seed and a Friday semifinal date with Naples. Kaiserslautern will play defending champion and top-seeded Stuttgart.

Naples 26, Wiesbaden 14: The Wildcats clinched the final semifinal spot with a late victory over the Warriors.

Naples came out of the gate focused. The Wildcats used their mobility to get around Wiesbaden's taller defenders to score from close range.

Mia Rawlins scored 11 of her team's 22 points in the first half.

"This game was a must-win for us," Smith said. "We went through two tough games yesterday, one we won and one we lost, so we had to come and attack and start scoring right off."

Naples used Wiesbaden's defensive strategy against them, Smith said. They drew the defenders out of the key and used the openings to get in and score.

Division II

Bahrain 32, Black Forest 30: As the three-time defending Division II champions, the seemingly permanent fixture of the European title scene, the BFA Falcons

have every reason to believe in themselves as they attempt to further their dynasty. But they also know that confidence can escalate into hubris if left unchecked.

BFA standout Jessie Campbell defined the Falcons' understanding of where that line exists. The senior explained the approach the team is careful to avoid: "We're going to just automatically make it to the championship, because that's what it's been for the last three years," and the one it has adopted: "We have this, we know what our team can do."

The ideal result, Campbell said, is a champion that plays with "respect for every team" and knows no title can be assumed until it is won.

"The tournament is always the highlight of our year, highlight of our season. It's what we're working for," Campbell said. "That's what our end goal is, to come here and play our hardest and do our best."

BFA took a rare tournament defeat in its final preliminary game, though its 37-23 win over Florence and 32-17 defeat of Aviano on Wednesday left it in comfortable position to advance even before its loss to fifth-seeded Bahrain. Both Bahrain and BFA advanced by virtue of Bahrain's late 26-22 defeat of Florence.

Division III

Ansbach 17, Baumholder 14: "Sur-



Brussels' Ilana Lybarger puts the pressure on Signella's Kylee Fall in a Division II game at the DODEA Europe championships on Thursday. Despite Lybarger's efforts Signella won 31-15.

live and advance" is the motto of every championship hopeful in a tournament, suggesting that any win that prolongs one's season is a worthy one. But the on-court process is not so straightforward.

The second-seeded Dragons fought off considerable frustration Thursday as they nudged the stubborn sixth-seeded Bucs into elimination. Ansbach's shots weren't falling nearly as readily as they had in its 45-29 defeat of Hohenfels on Wednesday, requiring the Dragons to blaze a grittier path into the semifinals.

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Far East scoreboards

Wrestling

42nd Far East Tournament
Thursday
At Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan
Individual

101 pounds
Championship bracket — Alexi Mutoh, def. Kyle Burge, ASU; Dylan Huddleston, Kubasaki, def. Mikhail Titov, def. Kyle Burge, ASU; Manuel Ramos, def. Layla Standridge, Yokota; Mutoh, def. Layla Standridge, Yokota; Huddleston, def. Lima; Ramos, def. Huddleston, def. Lima.

Consolation bracket — Titov, def. Standridge.

108 pounds
Championship bracket — Vincent Rodriguez, Kubasaki, def. Anthony Rios, def. Angel Alcala, Zama; Fugate Pedro, Humphreys, def. Jones; Take Zoot, def. Kevin Kowit, Speight, Kadena; Kashiwara, St. Mary's, def. Joe Frazier, def. Austin Carpenter, Kubasaki, def. Jaden Powell, Edgren; Zoot, def. Pedro; Kashiwara, def. Carpenter.

Consolation bracket — Powell, def. Alcala; Frazier, def. Powell; Jones, def. Speight.

122 pounds
Championship bracket — Peter Junker, CAJ, def. Tre Boot-Nelson, Kinnick; Chris DeGrella, Yokota, def. Kato Hayash, h.a.; Harold Mancía, St. Mary's, def. Junker; Jeremy Mayers, Kubasaki, def. Anthony Aeppli, Edgren; Ira Kadet, ASU, def. Austin Shepherd, Kubasaki, def. Sam Lister, Humphreys; Mayers, def. Mancía; Kadet, def. DeGrella.

Consolation bracket — Lister, def. Boot-Nelson; Hayashi, def. Junker; Lister, def. Shepherd; Hayashi, def. Aeppli.

129 pounds
Championship bracket — Michiru Warren, ASU, def. Corinne Nepaul, Yokota; Jasit Bedi, St. Mary's, def. Gabriel Barrientos, Kadena; Bradley Ponsiano, Perry, def. Angel Fuentes, Zama; Warren, def. Ponsiano, Ocan, def. Bedi; Kemrick McDaniel, Kinnick, def. Ponsiano; Squires, def. Warren; Vanthos, def. McDaniel.

Consolation bracket — Ponsiano, def. Nepaul; Vanthos, def. Barrientos; Orr, def. Fuentes; Bedi, def. Ponsiano; Yu, def. Orr.

135 pounds
Championship bracket — Ramli Cellys, Yokota, def. Bela Buchanan, Perry; Ramli, def. Buchanan, def. Paul Meskery, def. Famiel, CAJ; Colin Lundberg, Kubasaki, def. Lewis Rickis, Edgren; def. Tai Van Dam, CAJ; Ricky Lindermann, ASU, def. Daniel Cortez, Seoul; Josiah Millare, Kinnick, def. Jordan Silva, Ocan; Will Allen, Humphreys, def. Celeros; Rickis, def. Lindermann; Victor Saavedra, Kubasaki, def. Millare.

Consolation bracket — Meskery, def. Van Dam; Millare, def. Buchanan; Meskery, def. Lindermann; Cortez, def. Famiel; Silva, def. Celeros; Millare, def. Meskery; Silva, def. Cortez.

141 pounds
Championship bracket — Efrain Velazquez-Lebron, Seoul, def. Kristian Kim, Perry; Joey DeGrella, Yokota, def. Leo Karita, CAJ; Colin Lundberg, Kubasaki, def. Aguirre Valdez, def. Hanson; Hanson, Kadena, def. Eligh Cabe, Zama; Ethan Hamilton, Kinnick, def. Jared Rickis, Edgren; Nighant Chanda, St. Mary's, def. Velazquez-Lebron; Lundberg, def. DeGrella; Hanson, def. Karita, def. Hanson; Hamilton, def. Ben Lister, Humphreys; Chanda, def. Lundberg; Sadler, def. Hanson.

Consolation bracket — Karita, def. Aguirre Valdez; Irons, def. Lister; Han-

seon, def. Karita; DeGrella, def. Cabe; Velazquez-Lebron, def. Rickis; Irons, def. Hanson; Velazquez-Lebron, def. DeGrella.

148 pounds
Championship bracket — Ethan Hovinketter, Edgren, def. Joseph Koo, Ocan; Keith Leon Guerrero, Kinnick, def. Kyong Chun, CAJ; Top Williams, Seoul, def. Robert Rodgers, Perry; Luke Moseley, Kubasaki, def. Hovinketter; Leon Guerrero, def. Koo; Top, St. Mary's; Kim Zoot, ASU, def. Williams; Moseley, def. Leon Guerrero; Zoot, def. Jaiden Workman, Humphreys.

Consolation bracket — Williams, def. Koo; Hovinketter, def. Rodgers; Williams, def. Chun; Hovinketter, def. Lawlor.

Championship bracket — Mack Togan, Yokota, def. Shawn Swindell, Perry; Gavin Jackson, Daegu, def. Mateo Barrientos, Kubasaki; Kieran Kell, ASU, def. James Ahn, Humphreys; Cody Deltman, Edgren, def. Jaiden Luengas, Seoul; Marcus Inthavixay, Ocan, def. Togan; Marc Morgan, Kinnick, def. Jackson; Kell, def. Warren Koslow, St. Mary's; Deltman, def. Finton Cawley, Kadena; Inthavixay, def. Morgan; Deltman, def. Cawley.

Consolation bracket — Cawley, def. Swindell; Koslow, def. Barrientos; Jackson, def. Ahn; Togan, def. Luengas; Koslow, def. Cawley; Togan, def. Jackson.

168 pounds
Championship bracket — Bradleigh McCollum, Edgren, def. Cameron Evans, Yokota; Aubrey St. John, def. Hunter Staley, Perry; Zeno Sadler, ASU, def. McCollum; Daqye Mueller, Kubasaki, def. Bradleigh, Seoul; Lev Titov, St. Mary's, def. Nicholas Neary, Kadena; St. John, def. Payton Davis, Humphreys; Sadler, def. Mueller; Titov, def. St. John.

Consolation bracket — Evans, def. Davis; McCollum, def. Staley; Evans, def. Neary; McCollum, def. Coyte.

180 pounds
Championship bracket — Jason Dudley, Edgren, def. Masah Kawasaki, ASU; Dudley, def. Dylan Galbraith, Kubasaki; Austin Fisher, Yokota, def. Jake De La Rosa, Humphreys; Brian Choe, Seoul, def. Lucas Watkins, Kinnick; Austin Koslow, St. Mary's, def. Cain Mumford, Zama.

Consolation bracket — Mumford, def. Kawasaki; Mumford, def. Watkins; Galbraith, def. De La Rosa.

215 pounds
Championship bracket — Daniel Rahman, ASU, def. Joey Nishida, Yokota; Michael Patton, St. Mary's, def. Derek Jackson, Perry; Rahman, def. Frank Hurtado-Gutierrez, Seoul; Chris Mason, Kinnick, def. Jarar Mensah, Ocan; Chase Quigley, Edgren, def. Jonathan Montanez, Humphreys; Haydn Peterson, Kubasaki, def. Patton; Mason, def. Rahman; Peterson, def. Quigley.

Consolation bracket — Hurtado-Gutierrez, def. Jacques by walkover; Patton, def. Nishida; Hurtado-Gutierrez, def. Mensah; Patton, def. Montanez.

Heavyweight
Championship bracket — Matthew Mahistade, Kubasaki, def. Jay Jackson, Yokota; Xavier Thors, Humphreys, def. Kemal Newton, Kinnick; Marshall China, Perry, def. Mahistade; Desmond Martin, Zama, def. Thors.

Basketball

Boys
At Camp Humphreys, South Korea

Division I
(Round robin)
Thursday's games
Humphreys 63, St. Mary's 44
Kadena 43, American School of Bangkok 25

American School in Japan 41, Kinnick 36
Kinnick 39, St. Mary's 25
Kinnick 59, Kadena 51
Kadena 64, ASB 47
ASB 55, Kubasaki 20
Kinnick 37, St. Mary's 34

Humphreys 74, Kinnick 55
Kadena 37, Kubasaki 42
Friday's games
Humphreys vs. Kadena, 9 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. St. Mary's, 9 a.m.
ASU vs. ASB, 9 a.m.
Kinnick vs. Kubasaki, noon
ASB vs. St. Mary's, noon
Kadena vs. ASU, noon
Humphreys vs. ASU, 4:30 p.m.
Kadena vs. St. Mary's, 4:30 p.m.
Kinnick vs. ASB, 6 p.m.
Humphreys vs. Kubasaki, 7:30 p.m.

Division II
Pool A
Thursday's games
Edgren 37, Seoul Foreign 35
Matthew C. Perry 44, Daegu 42
Zama 45, Perry 41
Seoul Foreign 48, Daegu 31
Edgren 53, Zama 45
Seoul Foreign 53, Perry 36

Friday's games
Edgren vs. Perry, 10:30 a.m.
Zama vs. Daegu, 10:30 a.m.
Edgren vs. Daegu, 1:30 p.m.
Zama vs. St. Mary's, 1:30 p.m.

Pool B
Thursday's games
Christian Aeppli, Seoul 54, Ocan 47
E.J. King 52, Yokota 29
King 38, CAJ 36
Yokota 61, Seoul American 25
King 47, Ocan 34
CAJ 58, Seoul American 25

Friday's games
Ocan vs. Seoul American, 9 a.m.
ASU vs. Yokota, 10:30 a.m.
Okan vs. Yokota, 1:30 p.m.
Kinnick vs. American, 1:30 p.m.
Single-elimination playoffs
Pairings TBA

Girls
At Kadena Air Base, Okinawa

Division I
(Round robin)
Thursday's games
ASB 53, Kadena 32
Humphreys 42, Zion Christian 26
ASU 32, Kinick 21
Kadena 48, Kinick 9
ASB 42, Kubasaki 10
ASU 33, Zion Christian 14
ASB 48, Humphreys 15
ASU 16, Kubasaki 14
Zion Christian 28, Kinick 24
Kadena 35, Kubasaki 9
Humphreys 36, Kinick 7

Friday's games
Humphreys vs. Kadena, 9 a.m.
Kubasaki vs. Zion Christian, 9 a.m.
ASB vs. ASU, 9 a.m.
Kadena vs. ASU, noon
ASB vs. Zion Christian, noon
Kubasaki vs. Kinick, noon
ASU vs. Humphreys, 2 p.m.
Kadena vs. Zion Christian, 3 p.m.
ASB vs. Kinick, 4:30 p.m.

Division II
Pool A
Thursday's games
Sacred Heart 27, Seoul 24
King 21, Perry 16
Zama 47, Perry 11
Sacred Heart 25, King 22
Sacred Heart 44, Perry 17
Zama 54, Seoul 16

Friday's games
Seoul vs. Perry, 10:30 a.m.
Zama vs. King, 10:30 a.m.
King vs. Seoul, 1:30 p.m.

Pool B
Thursday's games
CAJ 33, Ocan 12
Yokota 33, Daegu 31
CAJ 33, Daegu 43
Yokota 33, Daegu 15
CAJ 38, Edgren 14
Daegu 33, Ocan 32

Friday's games
Edgren vs. Ocan, 9 a.m.
Yokota vs. CAJ, 10:30 a.m.
Yokota vs. Ocan, 1:30 p.m.
Daegu vs. Edgren, 1:30 p.m.
Single-elimination playoffs
Pairings TBA



Sue Onocho/AP

Army coach Jeff Monk stands with his team after an overtime loss to Oklahoma on Sept. 22 in Norman, Okla. The Black Knights won an academy-record 11 games last season and earned a final ranking of No. 19 in the AP Top 25.

Recruiting remains challenge for Army

By JOHN KEIKS

Associated Press

What a difference a year doesn't make at West Point. An academy-record 11 wins last season for Army and a final ranking of No. 19 in the AP Top 25?

So what? "I don't know if it's been a boon (for recruiting). It's still the same challenges," coach Jeff Monk said after crisscrossing the country in search of talent. "You've got to go and win the recruiting battle. Winning certainly helps you get their interest, but I don't know if winning a lot of football games helps anybody understand any more what West Point is. Some people don't realize that our guys are in college. 'Do they just get the soldiers to play? How does that work?' You'd be surprised how many times you've got to explain it."

In his five seasons, Monk has convinced enough teenagers to join the brotherhood and make some history at West Point. Two years ago the Black Knights matched the school record with 10 wins and last season, the first year that every player on the roster was recruited by Monk and his staff, Army broke that record, finishing 11-2, won its third straight bowl game, and captured the Lambert Trophy, given annually to the top FBS team in the East.

The last time the Black Knights won the Lambert, which was awarded Thursday, was after Pete Dawkins led them to their last unbeaten season (1958) and won the Heisman Trophy. "It means our players did a great job. I didn't have to play a single play the whole year," said Monk, whose fiery demeanor in practice and on the sideline is mirrored by his players on the field. "That's a recognition of our team and our team's success. I'm proud that the folks that picked those things recognized that our team did a really good job this year."

Monken was recognized, too. He won the George Munger and Vince Lombardi coach of the year awards and was one of seven finalists for the Paul "Bear" Bryant Coach of the Year award that went to Dabo Swinney of national champion Clemson. When he was hired in December 2013, Monk signed a six-year contract. The academy extended that deal for two more years prior to the 2017 campaign and last month Monk agreed to another extension, through the 2024 season. "I hope it helps (recruiting)," Monk said. "Everybody wants to know that they're going to a program where there's stability. There is a commitment to keep stability in the program. It does help to be able to say this is a commitment our academy has made to the program."

The Army brass thought Monk-10 was the right person for the job and his record validates the decision to hire him, with 29 wins in the past three seasons using an approach that's blue-collar to its core. As for recruiting, Army always signs multiple players at each position and the staff takes it from there. The new class won't be announced until July. "I'm most proud for our seniors this year to be able to accomplish what they did," Monk said. "Hopefully, the seniors coming up will add to that and set some marks of their own. "That's why we're here. If we can do that, it'll be a good year."



Kinnick's Alex Mutoh, top, gets Kadena's Manuel Ramos in a head-and-arm hold en route to victory in the 101-pound weight class Thursday.

AUTO RACING/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

McDowell defends decision not to push Logano at Daytona

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Michael McDowell was still digesting his fifth-place finish at the Daytona 500 when Joey Logano appeared at the front of his car, angrily pointing at the Ford logo.

He was questioning McDowell's loyalty to the brand.

"He shows up pointing at the Ford emblem, pushing on the Ford, making his point 'Hey, you are a Ford driver, why didn't you push me?'" McDowell told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "It's a two-way street, and if I got out of the car and started screaming at Joey for not going with me, everybody would say I was ridiculous and that I don't belong up there and am not fast enough. God forbid I don't push him to a win, now I'm the bad guy."



McDowell

The tension between a pair of Ford drivers is the fallout from a disappointing Daytona 500 for the blue oval brand. The manufacturer debuted its new Mustang at Daytona International Speedway and positioned its stable of drivers as heavy favorites to win "The Great American Race." Most manufacturers align their teams to work together at Daytona and Talladega with the goal of getting one of their drivers — doesn't matter who — into victory lane.

Ford fell short in the late overtime sprint to the checkered flag on Sunday, perhaps because McDowell made a lane change that separated him from Logano. Both drivers were trying to win, yet both probably needed to work together to have any chance at catching winner Denny Hamlin. Instead, Ford wound up locked out of a Joe Gibbs Racing and Toyota podium sweep. Logano finished fourth ahead of McDowell.

McDowell didn't want to hear about brand loyalty in the aftermath of the race: "I just told him that my team doesn't pay me to push Joey Logano to a win."

McDowell is winless in 286 Cup starts since 2008 and doesn't drive for one of NASCAR's superstar teams. He moved last season to Front Row Motorsports, one of NASCAR's smaller teams, and made his top-10 finish but was tied for a career-best 26th in the final Cup standings.

"I don't have many chances to win races," McDowell said. "I have maybe four or five shots a year to try to win a race. These other guys, they have 35 more chances. I needed to take my chance to win a race."

Logano is NASCAR's reigning

champion and a former Daytona 500 winner.

So when McDowell found himself lined up with the leaders in the closing laps of the Daytona 500 he was racing for the victory with no time to consider team alliances. He pulled out of the bottom lane, away from Logano, and tried to hook onto Kyle Busch in the top lane. The move hampered Logano's shot to catch Hamlin for the win.

McDowell has watched replays, spoken with Logano and Ford executives, and said he now realizes his best bet for a win would have been staying in line behind Logano.

"You've got a split-second decision to make a move and I had the momentum and thought it was best to go to the outside and thought that was the right move," McDowell said. "Looking back at it if I could do it over again, the bottom would have been better for me."

He remains adamant it was not his responsibility to help Logano win.

Teamwork between manufacturers can work, but often depends on where drivers fall in the alliance.

Team Penske and Stewart-Haas Racing are the big shots at Ford. McDowell and the Front Row Motorsports group seem more like distant cousins. McDowell said he, David Ragan and their teams were not privy to the Penske and SHR pit strategy at Daytona; SHR driver Clint Bowyer weaved around McDowell late in the race, a move that dumped McDowell into a slower middle lane, then cut McDowell off to create another late multi-car accident as Bowyer tried to force his way back into line.

"Those guys don't work with Front Row Motorsports at all," McDowell said. "They don't help us at all. They want us to be there to support them when they need it, but they don't let us in on when they're going to pit, they don't share strategy, they don't tell us what's going on. And so my frustration with Joey is, 'Don't come to me talking about brand loyalty when you guys don't do nothing to help us. And you want me to help you when you don't do anything for me.'"

McDowell's finish was a career best in the Daytona 500, placing him ninth in the Cup standings as NASCAR shifts to Atlanta Motor Speedway this weekend with a new rules package that is designed to tighten the on-track competition. The new rules are intended to slow the cars to keep them closer together and improve passing opportunities.

If it works, then drivers like McDowell might be able to consistently compete with the big teams. McDowell has seven career top-10 finishes, all but one at either Daytona or Talladega.



GREGORY BULL/AP

Gonzaga junior forward Rui Hachimura had 22 points and 10 rebounds in the No. 2 Bulldogs' 79-67 win over the Toreros on Saturday in San Diego.

Experience: Veteran influence matters

FROM BACK PAGE

The Zags have lost twice all season, won 16 straight and were a No. 1 seed in the NCAA selection committee's initial rankings.

"I feel it is much easier on the coaches not having to teach all that basic stuff," Clarke said. "They are able to dive into the harder stuff. Experience is something you can't buy or train for. It's something you have to get."

No. 3 Virginia was on the wrong end of an all-time college basketball upset by losing to UMBEC in the NCAA Tournament's first round, but has nearly everyone back and plenty of motivation for redemption. The Cavaliers also have two losses and were slated as a No. 1 seed.

Fifth-ranked Tennessee has its top six scorers back from last year's surprising SEC title field, led by senior Admiral Schofield, juniors Grant Williams and Jordan Bone. The Vols were a No. 1 seed in the initial rankings and spent four weeks at No. 1 in the AP poll.

Nevada got a huge boost when the Martin twins and Jordan Caroline decided to return. Coach Eric Musselman surrounded them with experienced transfers and the sixth-ranked Wolf Pack have looked like Final Four contenders.

Oats' Bulls returned five of their top six scorers from a team that knocked off Arizona in the first round of last year's NCAA Tournament. Buffalo has been ranked since the first regular-season poll. No. 25 this week — and is in position to reach the NCAA Tournament even if it doesn't earn an automatic bid by winning the MAC tournament.

The biggest difference for the Bulls' offense, Buffalos was 13th in Division I in KenPom's defensive efficiency rankings and is up to No. 32 this season.

"I think the defensive side of it comes from having that experience, that veteran leadership that understands the importance of guarding the people," Oats said. "Your offense can come and go on

Syracuse's Boeheim strikes, kills pedestrian

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse men's basketball coach Jim Boeheim struck and killed a man walking on an interstate late Wednesday night as he tried to avoid hitting the man's disabled vehicle, police say.

Syracuse police say 51-year-old Jorge Jimenez was in a car with three others before midnight Wednesday when his vehicle crashed into a guardrail on I-690 in Syracuse.

Boeheim struck Jimenez while trying to avoid the vehicle. Jimenez was taken to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead, police said.

Boeheim, 74, is cooperating with the investigation.

"He stopped immediately and exited the vehicle," said Syracuse Sgt. Matthew Malinowski.

Police said sobriety tests were administered to Boeheim and were negative for any signs of impairment. No tickets have been issued to Boeheim at this time and the investigation is continuing.

A freezing rain had fallen earlier Wednesday night, though it is unclear if the weather had anything to do with the crash.

There was no immediate comment from Syracuse University.

Boeheim has coached at Syracuse for 43 years, winning a national title in 2003 and making five Final Four appearances. His team defeated Louisville 69-49 Wednesday night during a home game.

— Associated Press



Boeheim

any given night, but your defense needs to be there every night."

The veteran influence starts in the planning stages.

No matter how high-rated a freshman is, there's always a learning curve when arriving at college. Not only do they have to adjust to academic life, but the rigors of playing high-level college basketball. That's why teams loaded with freshmen — Duke being a notable exception — often end up better at the end of the season than they were when it started.

Veteran teams hit the court running.

They know the plays, the expectations, even the conditioning requirements. Instead of repeatedly going over basics with young players, coaches with veteran teams can dive into more intricate aspects of the game.

It works game to game, too. Veteran players have seen some of the opponents on the schedule before, know their tendencies, know how

the coaching staff wants to attack them on offense and defense.

"When you have veteran guys who are used to a detailed scouting report, it certainly makes it easier," Musselman said. "A high school player comes to the college ranks, the scouting is not nearly as detailed."

There's a big difference physically and mentally, too.

High school players often arrive at college skinny, looking nothing like they will as future upperclassmen or future pros. Working with a collegiate-level strength coach and the natural maturation of the human body turns scrawny freshmen into beefed-up upperclassmen.

The mental maturation follows a similar strain.

"They've been down, they've been up, they've been in loud crowds on the road, at home and I think there's no substitute," Virginia coach Tony Bennett said. "It's invaluable to have all the experiences that they have."

NFL/MLB



KEITH SHAKOCC/AP

Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Antonio Brown, left, smiles as he is introduced by Steelers President Art Rooney II for a news conference about Brown's contract extension on Feb. 27, 2017 in Pittsburgh. Brown ended his lengthy standoff with the team by meeting with Rooney, though any shot at reconciliation between the two sides appears to be out of the question.

Steelers won't tag Bell, will explore trade for Brown

By WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Le'Veon Bell is free to go. Antonio Brown, maybe not so much.

The Pittsburgh Steelers have no plans to place a transition tag on Bell, allowing the star running back to reach the open market when free agency begins next month. And while the team will explore moving Brown, general manager Kevin Colbert stressed Wednesday the Steelers will not cut the talented but turbulent star wide receiver just to appease him.

"By no means are we going to make a trade or any type of move that will not be beneficial to the Pittsburgh Steeler organization," Colbert said. "We will not be discounting [Brown] on the trade market and we certainly will not be releasing [him]."

Brown began openly campaigning for a new team shortly after Pittsburgh finished 9-6-1, upset after being made inactive for the regular-season finale against Cincinnati for failing to provide coach Mike Tomlin with an update on his status after Tomlin sent Brown home from practice a couple of days before the game to nurse an injury.

The Steelers won but missed the playoffs. Brown has spent most of the last two months thumbing his nose at the organization via social media in an effort to assure he wouldn't be welcomed back, including calling out quarterback Ben Roethlisberger for having an "owner mentality" and questioning Tomlin's integrity.

Yet Colbert said he doesn't believe Brown's erratic behavior will hurt his trade value and didn't even rule out a chance that Brown returns to Pittsburgh for a 10th season in 2019. Brown met with Colbert, team president

Art Rooney II and vice president Omar Khan in Florida on Tuesday to clear the air. Though both sides agreed "looking into a trade would probably be the best course of action," Brown and Rooney posed for a picture afterward, a gesture Colbert called more indicative of Brown's character than the drama that's surrounded him at times during his prolific rise from sixth-round pick to the most productive wide receiver of his generation.

The team has not yet entered into active trade talks for Brown, the only player in NFL history with six straight seasons of at least 100 receptions. That figures to pick up with free agency set to begin on March 13 and Brown due a \$2.5 million roster bonus on March 17.

"He believes there will be demand and hopefully for our situation there's a demand that can satisfy anybody," Colbert said.

What "satisfy" means is up to the Steelers and not Brown, who along with agent Drew Rosenhaus will be kept in the loop but will not be given freedom to go seek their own deal. Colbert declined to get into specifics on what the team is looking for, pointing out it could be a draft pick or an established player or perhaps some combination. The Dallas Cowboys gave the Oakland Raiders a 2019 first-round pick for Amari Cooper last fall. Pittsburgh even snagged a third-rounder from the Raiders last spring for Martavis Bryant.

Neither Cooper nor Bryant has anywhere near Brown's résumé, but they also don't have his contract. Brown, who turns 31 in July, has three years left on the \$68 million extension he signed in the spring of 2017. Though he's cryptically mentioned "new demands" in various social media posts, if traded he would be tied to that deal with his new team.

Baseball players unhappy with plummeting salaries

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Neil Walker's salary dropped from \$17.2 million to \$2 million in two years. Greg Holland was cut from \$14 million to \$2 million this season. Daniel Murphy fell from \$17.5 million to \$10 million.

While Manny Machado agreed to a pending \$300 million, 10-year contract with San Diego and Bryce Harper is likely to top Giancarlo Stanton's record \$325 million, 13-year deal, many less-than-superstar veterans have been routed on the free-agent market.

Players want change, and management could be open to negotiations for alterations to the collective bargaining agreement as part of an extension of the current deal, set to expire in December 2021.

"It's really clear there's been a redistribution of how clubs are looking at veteran players," agent Scott Boras said Wednesday. "We have a clear problem in the industry of a non-competitive career. Like any patient with a malady, we have to address it immediately. Otherwise it is going to get steadily worse."

Of the 111 announced agreements among the 164 players who exercised their free-agency rights after the World Series, 36 were for minor league contracts and 26 were one-year deals for less than last year's average salary of just over \$4 million.

In all, 46 players got one-year contracts, 19 two-year deals and seven three-year agreements.



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred has been criticized by players' union head Tony Clark for blaming players' demands for the slow free-agent market.

Just three longer contracts for free agents have been announced: left-hander Patrick Corbin's \$140 million, six-year deal with Washington, outfielder A.J. Pollock's \$60 million, five-year contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers and pitcher Nathan Eovaldi's \$68 million, four-year package with Boston.

Clubs are replacing veterans with younger players earning at or near the \$555,000 minimum who lack the roughly 2½ years of major league service needed to be eligible for salary arbitration. In the age of analytics, cheaper may not be better, but often it's not much worse.

"All veteran players of a certain age are being affected by

this analysis, which is not just widespread but fairly consistent across most clubs," said former New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson, now an Oakland Athletics senior adviser. "The math is the math."

Spending on big league payrolls dropped last season for the first time since 2010, an \$18 million fall to \$4.23 billion, according to figures compiled by the commissioner's office and obtained by The Associated Press. While the decrease was attributable to drug and domestic violence suspensions and a player retiring at midseason, payrolls were otherwise flat, unusual for a sport with rising revenue.

Team behavior changed following a new collective bargaining agreement, which imposed a higher luxury tax on big spenders. The New York Yankees dropped under the tax threshold last year for the first time since 2003 and the Dodgers for the first time since 2012. Neither showed great interest in Harper or Machado.

"Isn't it odd that all 30 teams have gone younger and cheaper rather than older and better?" agent Jay Reisinger said. "It's more than a coincidence that guys remain unsigned. Clubs are treating the tax threshold as a salary cap. If you look at the salary-cap sports, it is most often the middle class that gets squished."

In addition to Harper, Craig Kimbrel, Dallas Keuchel, Marwin Gonzalez, Carlos Gonzalez and Gio Gonzalez were still on the market on the eve of the exhibition opener scheduled for Thursday.



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

Second baseman Daniel Murphy signed a two-year, \$24 million contract with the Colorado Rockies.

MLB

Cutch performer: Veteran gives Phils options

McCutchen, a five-time All-Star outfielder, could help Philadelphia in several ways this season

Associated Press

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Andrew McCutchen is ready to boost the Philadelphia Phillies with his bat, glove and brain.

Signed to a \$50 million, three-year contract, McCutchen said he enjoys his role as the veteran in the outfield and likes what he's seen from his younger teammates.

McCutchen, 32, is set to start in left. He returns to the National League after finishing up last season with the New York Yankees — he spent his first nine seasons in Pittsburgh, joined San Francisco last year and then was traded to the Bronx.

The five-time All-Star hit a combined .255 with 20 home runs and 65 RBIs last season.

McCutchen said he is coming into camp knowing that the Phillies have a surplus of outfielders, with Odubel Herrera, Roman Quinn, Nick Williams and Aaron Altherr looking for time.

"There are no set spots," McCutchen said. "We've got a lot of guys out who are competing for positions and that's a good thing to have in camp."

"Everybody is out there working hard. Working to win the job or even if they don't they know they could be the next man up. The competition is good for the outfield as a whole," he said.

While speculation swirls that the Phillies are in the mix for free agent outfielder Bryce Harper, McCutchen said he sees a lot of

upside in the current group of outfielders in camp. He compares them to his former teammates with the Pirates.

"It's similar to when I was on the Pirates with Starling Marte and Gregory Polanco," McCutchen said. "We were able to work together, challenge each other and grow together."

Phillies manager Gabe Kapler has raved about McCutchen's versatility and ability to hit anywhere in the lineup, suggesting he'll use him at the top of the order when the situation presents itself.

McCutchen will likely start out around the middle of the lineup when spring games start Friday.

"I can hit anywhere you put me," McCutchen said.

By the numbers

.287 **.255** **5**

Phillies outfielder

Andrew McCutchen's career batting average through 10 major league seasons with three teams.

McCutchen's batting average last season with the San Francisco Giants and New York Yankees, a career low.

All-Star appearances for McCutchen, coming from 2011 to 2015 with the Pirates.

SOURCE: Associated Press



CURTIS COMPTON, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION/AP

Newly acquired Atlanta Braves third baseman Josh Donaldson takes swings during batting practice Wednesday at spring training practice in Kissimmee, Fla.

Donaldson, 33, trying stay off DL

By DICK SCANLON

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Finding a job was pretty easy for Josh Donaldson. Proving he can keep it will be the tough part.

The former AL MVP didn't have to wait long for a new opportunity, signing a one-year, \$23 million contract with the Atlanta Braves less than a month after the World Series ended.

"I didn't expect it to go that quickly," Donaldson said Wednesday, the day before his first organized workout with the NL East champions. "It was my first time in free agency so I had something of an idea, but you don't really know. I was very happy with the timing of it. They gave me the ease of the entire offseason to know which team I was going to be with."

At 33 and coming off two straight injury-riddled seasons, the third baseman understood his market value had changed, that he would have to prove he

can play an entire season.

"I wasn't expecting much (contract) length," he said. "I think you have to be realistic in what you're looking for... One year, I felt, was a great opportunity to come here and help this organization. I feel like if I go out and play well, there could be a chance for more years after this."

After finishing among the top eight in AL MVP voting four straight times and winning the award with Toronto in 2015, Donaldson was limited to 113 games by a calf injury in 2017. Last season, due mostly to a shoulder injury, he played in just 52 games with the Blue Jays and Cleveland Indians.

"I'm not a robot," he said. "Everybody, if they play long enough, is going to deal with injuries — 2017 was the first time I've missed time due to an injury. Then 2018 was a lost season because of injuries. As we continue in our careers, our bodies are constantly evolving, and we're just trying to be ahead of that and focus on being as efficient and as strong as possible."

Pirates' owner: Pricy free agent would lead to imbalanced payroll

Associated Press

BRADENTON, Fla. — Having watched the San Diego Padres reach a \$300 million, 10-year deal with Manny Machado, Pirates owner Bob Nutting doesn't think it makes sense for Pittsburgh general manager Neal Huntington to add a pricey free agent.

A huge salary could cause the portion paid to one player to be "overweight."

"You get an imbalanced payroll, that you have much more challenging team dynamic, much more challenging clubhouse dynamic, much more limitation in crafting an overall roster that can bring a championship," Nutting said Wednesday. "I'm not sure that that necessarily makes a team more competitive and more ready to win a championship."

Pittsburgh was 82-79 last year for its fourth winning record in 26 years. The Pirates acquired two-time All-Star right-hander Chris Archer from the Tampa Bay Rays last summer and reliever Keone Kela from the Texas Rangers.

Attendance dropped by 450,000 from 2017 and was the lowest since 1996, and Nutting said he hopes for a rebound. Nutting said the Pirates can contend in the NL Central, where four of the five teams had winning records last season.

"The expectation of the fan base should be that we put a competitive team on the field that is built to win," Nutting said. "That's what their expectations deserve to be. Frankly, I think that a seven-game improvement last year was a meaningful step forward, and we are absolutely positioned to take another meaningful step forward and get us back into that range where we have a very good shot at playoffs and, once you get

'The expectation of the fan base should be that we put a competitive team on the field that is built to win.'

Bob Nutting
Pittsburgh Pirates owner

into the playoffs, of moving down the pike."

Pittsburgh was 26th among the 30 teams in payroll last year at \$90.6 million for its 40-man roster and again will have one of the lowest. That makes Nutting unpopular with many fans.

"I think the only piece that worries me is to the extent that it negatively impacts the club," Nutting said of the criticism. "And that's unfortunate and up to me to do everything I can to make sure that the degree of commitment that I show — and I'll say show as opposed to have, because I deeply believe that I am fully committed to this organization and to its success and devote all the energy I possibly can to seeing that happen — if I need to be more effective to communicate that in order to help and support the team, that's on me."

Notes: Archer threw batting practice for the first time this spring training. He underwent hernia surgery in November but is fully recovered. ... RF Gregory Polanco is taking batting practice as he rehabilitates following left shoulder surgery in October, but he is throwing from just 100 feet. He is expected to begin the season on the injured list.

MLB



MORRY GASH, ABOVE, AND GERALD HERBERT, BELOW/AP

Above: The two-time defending NL champion Dodgers' staff is anchored by three-time Cy Young winner Clayton Kershaw.
Below: Chris Sale helped lead the Red Sox to a World Series title.



Even in age of bullpens, teams built on starters

By MIKE FITZPATRICK
 Associated Press

Forget about this bullpen obsession for a moment. Believe it or not, plenty of big league teams are still anchored by well-armed rotations.

In this age of openers and closers, with relievers starting games and starters rarely finishing them, it might seem starting pitchers have been devalued by executives all over baseball.

Dallas Keuchel, the 2015 AL Cy Young Award winner, is a 31-year-old free agent still looking for a job. Same for fellow lefty Gio Gonzalez, a two-time All-Star one season removed from going 15-9 with a 2.96 ERA in 201 innings.

Meanwhile, short relievers like Zack Britton (\$39 million), Jeurys Familia (\$30 million), Kelvin Herrera (\$18 million) and Joakim Soria (\$15 million) had no trouble getting multiyear deals this winter.

Doesn't anyone remember what Koufax and Drysdale did for the Dodgers?

Madux, Glavine and Smoltz with the Braves?

"At the end of the day, your starting staff is the backbone of your team," Washington ace Max Scherzer said. "Being a reliable starting staff, that's something that is underappreciated in the game."

Not so for organizations like the Nationals, Red Sox, Indians and Mets, who have built their foundations with starting pitching.

Some say that's not cost effective, partly due to the rate of injury. And it's true, having a top-notch rotation can be expensive.



MICHAEL WYKE/AP

Gerrit Cole helped the Astros' rotation lead the majors with a 3.16 ERA and 1,101 strikeouts last season.

That's certainly a big reason why small-market, low-payroll teams such as Tampa Bay, Oakland and Milwaukee relied so heavily on their bullpens last year, often successfully using relievers as one- or two-inning starters.

"We'll see where it takes us. The game is evolving," Mets pitching coach Dave Eiland said. "To each his own. I mean, every club has to do what they feel is best in world baseball games."

But bear this in mind: The teams with the four best ERAs among starting pitchers all won their divisions last season. Of the seven worst starter ERAs, five of those clubs finished in last place — and none of the bottom eight won more than 73 games.

"It's hard to survive a whole season with just the bullpen, even if it is great," St. Louis Cardinals infielder Matt Carpenter said.

As pitchers in all roles begin limbering up at spring training, here's a quick look at baseball's best rotations:

Cleveland Indians

Indians starters threw 993 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings last season, most in the majors, and ranked third with a 3.39 ERA. Two-time Cy Young Award winner Corey Kluber is a well-established ace. Carlos Carrasco has been remarkably consistent and quirky All-Star Trevor Bauer had a 2.21 ERA and 221 strikeouts in 175 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings a year ago. But does anyone outside Ohio realize No. 4 starter Mike Clevinger posted a 3.02 ERA and 207 Ks in 200 innings?

Boston Red Sox

Seven-time All-Star Chris Sale is as nasty as it gets from the left side. David Price finally enjoyed postseason success last year and fellow Cy Young winner Rick Porcello is an awfully nice piece in the middle. The defending World Series champions brought back October hero Nathan Eovaldi on a \$68 million contract. And with 13-game winner Eduardo Rodriguez at the back end, Boston goes five deep.

Washington Nationals

Like the Red Sox, the Nationals have paid handsomely for their pricey rotation. Scherzer has won three Cy Young Awards and finished second in NL balloting last year. He's joined by hard-throwing Stephen Strasburg, and the Nationals spent \$140 million this offseason to replace Gonzalez with left-hander Patrick Corbin. "You're not going to face a better top three than that, I don't think," Carpenter said. Washington also signed veteran Anibal Sanchez to a \$19 million contract.

Houston Astros

Justin Verlander and Gerrit Cole form an imposing 1-2 punch that helped Houston leaders lead the majors with a 3.16 ERA and 1,101 strikeouts last season. There is depth and young talent behind them, but the loss of Keuchel and Charlie Morton in free agency could take a toll. Collin McHugh and Wade Miley step in.

Los Angeles Dodgers

The two-time defending NL champions do it with depth behind three-time Cy Young winner Clayton Kershaw. Walker Buehler lived up to the hype as a rookie last season, and left-handers Rich Hill and Hyun-Jin Ryu are usually effective when healthy. Los Angeles starters were second in the majors with a 3.19 ERA last year.

New York Mets

NL Cy Young Award winner Jacob deGrom was the best pitcher in baseball last season with a 1.70 ERA. He's followed by 2016 All-Star Noah Syndergaard and talented righty Zack Wheeler, who finally fulfilled his ample promise with a dominant second half last year. Injuries are always a concern, but the Mets could also get more from Steven Matz and Jason Vargas in 2019. "I wouldn't trade our rotation for anybody's," Eiland said.

AP freelance writer Chuck King contributed.

SPORTS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Vet set

Experience paying dividends as March Madness approaches

By JOHN MARSHALL

Associated Press

Buffalo's coaches spent part of Tuesday morning's walkthrough going over defensive assignments, making sure the players were prepared for that night's game against Ohio.

As the players moved to their various spots at the coaches' direction, senior guard Dontay Caruthers began telling sophomore Dominic Johnson where to go and what to expect from the Bobcats. In his third season at Buffalo and a former MAC defensive player of the year, Caruthers was spot on with his instructions to Johnson, a walk-on from the football team.

"He was doing a great job," Bulls coach Nate Oats said. "I mean, it was as good as any assistant coach would do on anything."

Top-ranked Duke has garnered plenty of attention this season with its quartet of one-and-done freshmen who seem to play with poise beyond their years.

The rest of the AP Top 25 is dotted with veteran teams — at least by college basketball standards — primed to make deep March runs.

No. 2 Gonzaga is led by Josh Perkins and Brandon Clarke, who played on the 2016-17 team that reached the national championship game. So did Killian Tillie, who's out for the second time this season with a foot injury. All-America candidate Rui Hashimura saw limited action in 28 games that season and sophomore guard Zach Norvell watched it all from the bench as a redshirt.

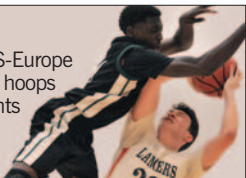
SEE EXPERIENCE ON PAGE 60

Pictured, clockwise from top: Nevada senior Jordan Caroline; Gonzaga senior Josh Perkins; Buffalo senior Dontay Caruthers; Tennessee junior Grant Williams; and Virginia senior Jack Salt.

AP photos

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